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ABSTRACT

This document contains a description of the Georgia High School Graduation Test in English Language Arts. The test item specifications, reflecting the Georgia State Quality Core Curriculum, are used by writers and reviewers who are responsible for the development of test items. Much of the content in the description is based on earlier test versions developed between 1994 and 1996. In its present form, the description includes the test content and the types of questions students will be expected to answer. Practical advice for test taking is also included. The test content description includes information for three content areas: (1) Reading/Literature; (2) Critical Thinking; and (3) Writing/Usage/Grammar. (SLD)

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ED 452 243

Georgia High School Graduation Tests

Test Content Description
for

English Language Arts

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OVERVIEW

SELECTION OF CONTENT FOR GEORGIA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION TESTS

In November 1997, the State Board of Education approved the revised Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) for use in public schools throughout Georgia. This QCC serves not only as the basis for instruction in Georgia schools, but for development of the Georgia High School Graduation Tests as well.

Much of the content of these *Test Content Descriptions* is based on earlier versions developed between 1994 and 1996. Those earlier versions were based on statewide surveys of Georgia high schools and numerous meetings with Georgia educators to determine which content could defensibly be included in the Georgia High School Graduation Tests. Since the publication of the earlier version of the QCC, test developers have analyzed the changes made to the original QCC document, met again with groups of Georgia teachers, and prepared the lists of QCC standards found in these *Test Content Descriptions*.

In their present form, these *Test Content Descriptions* should adequately describe not only the content that is assessed in the graduation tests, but the types of questions students will be asked to answer as well. Many of the item types may be unfamiliar to students who have not had much experience with questions that require them to apply what they have learned to new situations or to solve complex problems involving simple concepts. By publishing these *Test Content Descriptions*, it is the sincere desire of the Georgia Department of Education to offer encouragement to those who are preparing our students to be thinkers and problem solvers in all they do.

These *Test Content Descriptions* contain many sample test items and descriptions of how the items are developed. A careful study of these descriptions can be very helpful in preparing students for the tests. Teachers are encouraged to use these test items or others which they prepare themselves to match these descriptions to give students practice in responding to the types of items they are likely to encounter on the Georgia High School Graduation Tests.

In preparing students to take the Georgia High School Graduation Tests, it would also be helpful to consider the practical advice concerning test taking on the following page. We have offered this material before, but it bears repeating.

Instructions on Preparing for Tests

1. **Read everything carefully**. Many of the English Language Arts items involve short articles, poems, passages from reference materials, portions of historical documents, and other stimulus materials. All items require careful reading of the questions and have four answer choices. Stimulus materials will always include directions that tell students which items are based on them. Prior to reading the article or other stimulus material, students may find it helpful to skim the questions following it to get a better idea of the purpose of their reading.

2. **Remember that there are no trick questions**. While it is important to read each item carefully, no trick questions are included on the test. Students should not spend too much time trying to figure out what the question is actually asking. If the student has read the entire question (including all accompanying stimulus material), the real meaning and the apparent meaning should be the same. Negatively worded questions and convoluted combinations of answers (e.g., II and III only, A and B, A but not B, etc.) have not been included on the test unless absolutely necessary for clarification. Some questions require a complete reading of the entire text in order to get the correct answer.

3. **Consider every answer choice**. Students must sometimes go beyond what is stated and draw valid inferences. They must then choose from four alternatives the answer that best addresses the question. Some of the alternatives (distractors) will be attractive because they include an irrelevant detail, reveal common misconceptions, or apply the right information in the wrong way. Such distractors are included precisely to distinguish between students who can recognize and apply the facts and those who cannot.

4. **Guess intelligently.** Students are not penalized for guessing on this test. A student's final score is based on the number of correct responses chosen. Thus, students who cannot deduce the correct answer are encouraged to guess. Guessing is made easier if the student can eliminate one or more distractors as clearly incorrect. Be warned, however, that many of the distractors are made very attractive because they are based on common mistakes students make.

5. **Spend test time wisely**. Many tests are arranged so that the easiest items are first and the hardest are last. The Georgia High School Graduation Tests are **not** usually arranged that way. Instead, they are arranged as nearly as possible by strand and standard. Therefore, it is possible to run into several difficult items in a row, only to find much easier items later. If a portion of the test appears to be quite difficult, the student should not despair and assume that the rest of the test gets more difficult. It would be better to move on, answer as many questions as possible, and then come back to the more difficult ones.

6. **Check your work**. There are several opportunities for careless errors to enter into a student's response. The first is in the initial reading of the question (See #1 above). The second is in the selection of a response. Students should evaluate each alternative critically to make sure it actually addresses the question (See #3 above). The third opportunity is in the transfer of the correct answer to the answer document. Students should ask themselves two questions: "Am I on the right item number in the right section of the test?" and "Is this the answer that I mean to mark?"

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

INTRODUCTION

This document has been designed to acquaint Georgia teachers, curriculum directors, and other educators with the content of the Georgia High School Graduation Test in English Language Arts. It is based on the revised Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) approved by the State Board of Education in November 1997.

This document is a collection of test content descriptions for the English Language Arts component of the Georgia High School Graduation Tests. The test item specifications in this document are used by writers and reviewers who are responsible for the development of test items. Georgia teachers and educators may also find this document useful in preparing their own in-class tests.

Content Standards and Skills

Content Standards selected for assessment are presented exactly as they appear in the November 1997 QCC. In some instances, two or more standards will appear together. This pairing occurs when the standards are very similar and a single test content description has been developed to assess the cluster of standards, rather than each individual standard in that cluster. For convenience and quick reference, an abbreviated version of the QCC standard has been used. Standards are grouped as shown below. All three groups of standards require knowledge and skills.

Content Standards
Reading/Literature (47-49% of the test)
Critical Thinking (37-39% of the test)
Writing/Usage/Grammar (14-16% of the test

Item Types

All Content Items will fall into one of three stimulus and response categories presented in the chart below.

ITEM TYPES
Reading/Literature, Critical Thinking, Writing/Usage/Grammar

Item Type	Stimulus Characteristics	Cognitive Level	Correct Response Characteristics
1	Direct question requiring recall of facts and definitions	Low	Demonstrates knowledge of facts and basic ideas
2	Direct question requiring some interpretation beyond simple recall	Medium	Demonstrates ability to comprehend information from passages and apply that information in the method requested
3	Direct question requiring analysis of complicated problem situations, and drawing conclusions	High	Demonstrates the ability to solve complex problems, analyze reading passages, infer results, and differentiate between correct and incorrect information

Cognitive Levels

Cognitive levels are based on learning expectations, not item difficulty. Items may be written at the following levels:

Low: requires mastery at the literal or recognition level; typically, these items call for knowledge or recall of information that may be considered important or significant

Medium: requires some degree of interpretation beyond recall of information

High: requires a significant degree of interpretation, analysis, or application

Sample Items

Following are sample items representing each of the three Item Types.

Type 1. The words determined, pig-headed, stubborn, and unreasonable all have similar meanings. Which word would a writer or speaker use to express admiration for a character's behavior?

A. determined
B. pig-headed
C. stubborn
D. unreasonable

Explanation:
While the four options listed have similar meanings, students must choose the word with a positive connotation in order to answer the question correctly. Only option A would correctly be used to express admiration for a character's behavior. The other three options are typically used in a negative fashion. This item has a **low** cognitive level and falls under the strand **Writing/ Usage/Grammar**.

Type 1. Which literary movement began at the close of the eighteenth century, dominated in Western literature during the nineteenth century, and favored emotions and imagination over intellect and logic?

A. imagism
B. modernism
C. realism
D. romanticism

Explanation:
This question is a simple recall question, requiring the student to know the definitions of several literary movements. Only option D, romanticism, fulfills the definition espoused in the stem. This item has a **low** cognitive level and falls under the strand **Reading/Literature**.

Type 2. **Read the passage below and answer the question that follows**.

All the lions began to groom their fur. The smallest cub started to lick its paws, too.

What revision, if any, is needed in the passage?

A. Change *their* to *they're*.
B. Change *its* to *it's*.
C. Change *too* to *to*.
D. No revision is needed.

Explanation:
This item requires the student to be aware of standard American English. The knowledgeable student will realize that the passage is grammatically correct as is and will choose option D as the correct answer. The three distractors are common mistakes made by students. This item has a **medium** cognitive level because it requires some degree of interpretation beyond recall of information. The item falls under the strand **Writing/Usage/Grammar**.

Type 2. A senator was quoted as saying, "These tough new laws will send terrorists scuttling for their holes."

The **most likely** reason the senator chose these words would be to:

A. condemn terrorists by comparing them to rats.
B. imply that terrorists live in run-down buildings.
C. try to hide his lack of specific knowledge about terrorism.
D. imply that the old laws were totally ineffective against terrorism.

Explanation:
To answer this item correctly, a student must use critical thinking to draw a conclusion about the senator's comments. The knowledgeable student will recognize that option A is correct because the senator is comparing terrorists to rats "scuttling for their holes." The remaining three distractors may be plausible in and of themselves, but not in the context of the senator's speech. This item has a **medium** cognitive level and falls under the strand **Critical Thinking**.

Type 3. **Read the passage and answer the question that follows.**

In cities, enormous office buildings rise up to block the light and view. Emissions from traffic, furnaces, and power plants thicken the city air. The constant wail of sirens and the roar of traffic assault auditory nerves and distract attention. No wonder the people who live here become at least nervous, sometime desperate. Crowded together in these overpopulated centers, we can't sanitarily handle our waste or humanely help the impoverished, the homeless, the insane. Who would raise children in such a setting?

Which assertion is **best** supported by the evidence in the above passage?

A. Many poor people live in cities.
B. Cities are not good places to raise children.
C. Ambulance and police sirens make people nervous.
D. Cities are in such bad shape that they are losing population.

Explanation:
This question requires students to use critical thinking skills to understand the logical relationships among the items listed in the passage in order to choose the **best** answer. Option D

is the least likely choice for a correct answer since nothing in the passage suggests that cities are losing population. Options A and C are true statements in and of themselves, but neither is the best answer according to the passage in its entirety. Option B, which restates the topic sentence of the passage, is the correct choice for the best answer. This item has a **high** cognitive level since students must draw a conclusion from the information presented to get the correct answer. This item falls under the strand **Critical Thinking.**

Type 3. Read the passage and answer the following question.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today. . . .

(Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., August 1963)

For which audience does Dr. King address the above speech?

A. the citizens of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi
B. the children of former slaves and slaveholders
C. all the people living in the United States
D. all the people in the world

Explanation:
While this famous speech by Dr. King is well known as one of the keystones of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, students must dig below the surface, interpret the metaphors, and assess the tone of the piece to determine the audience. On the surface, one may think the correct answer is option A, as the passage specifically mentions these states. Some students may choose option B, as these groups of people are mentioned in the passage. Considering the historical perspective of the passage, students may choose option C as being correct, as the passage clearly mentions the American Dream, the Declaration of Independence, particular states, etc. All of these choices are incorrect, however. A deeper reading will reveal that Dr. King believed in equal rights for everyone in the world. Thus, option D in the correct answer. This question has a **high** cognitive level and falls under the strand **Reading/Literature**.

SUMMARY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CONTENT

The following are standards from the Quality Core Curriculum in English Language Arts.

Strand 1: Reading/Literature (47-49% of the test)

Standards

28. Recognizes different purposes and methods of writing; identifies a writer's tone and point of view.

29. Reads, discusses, and analyzes American literature representing diversity (gender, ethnicity).

31. Applies knowledge of literary terms to works of literature.

32. Develops an understanding of the effect of history on American literature (e.g., literary movements, periods).

33. Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences on the literature of a given period or culture.

Strand 2: Critical Thinking (37-39% of the test)

Standards

26. Invents solutions to problems using thinking techniques (e.g., metaphors, analogies, models, brainstorming, role-playing).

27. Analyzes logical relationships in arguments and detects fallacies.

34. Identifies the purpose of a speaker and is aware of the techniques a speaker is using to affect an audience.

35. Adapts words and strategies to various situations and audiences.

38. Evaluates messages and effects of mass media (newspaper, television, radio, film, and periodicals).

Strand 3: Writing/Usage/Grammar (14-16% of the test)

Standard

40. Understands that language usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

The following standards are Core Standards and apply to multiple strands. These standards apply to all strands unless marked by an asterisk (*). Questions with an asterisk do not apply to Strand 3 (Writing/Usage/Grammar).

02. Reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.*

04. Uses research process: selecting topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, organizing, summarizing, and presenting.

05. Identifies, comprehends, and summarizes the main and subordinate ideas in a written work. *

06. Learns that words gather meaning from their context and carry connotation and denotation. *

07. Distinguishes between fact and opinion. *

08. Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations. *

09. Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

10. Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

11. Uses inferential comprehension skills (e.g., predictions, comparisons, conclusions, implicitly stated main idea).

12. Defines unfamiliar words by using appropriate structural analysis skills including prefixes, suffixes, root words, and context clues.

14. Draws reasoned conclusions from various sources. *

15. Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling. *

17. Uses language appropriate to situation and audience. *

19. Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal writing (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social writing (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic writing (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business writing (letters, memos, and applications). *

20. Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature. *

21. Creates hypotheses and predicts outcomes. *

22. Defends conclusions rationally. *

Test Content Descriptions

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 02)

The student reads critically, asks pertinent questions, recognizes assumptions and implications, and evaluates ideas.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will recognize the purpose (to inform, persuade, instruct, entertain) of an author in a given passage, or the student will choose an appropriate situation for a given purpose.

The student will be asked to choose a situation in which a particular style or tone would be appropriate or to recognize the sorts of detail to be considered before deciding on the style or tone. Variety of tone and style might include: eager, compassionate, ironic, sarcastic, satiric, playful, humorous, friendly, personal, casual, folksy, forceful, persuasive, tactful, serious, formal, academic, objective, subjective, angry, simple.

The student will be given an argument in which there is a flaw (e.g., irrelevant detail) and asked to locate that flaw.

The student will be given a list of details and asked which detail would be relevant to a particular argument.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 02)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level

Medium

1. In which situation would the writer's purpose be primarily to instruct?

   A. writing jokes for a speech to be given before a civic group
   B. writing about the opening of a new play for the local newspaper
   ★ C. writing the owner's manual that accompanies a new videocassette recorder
   D. writing a letter to the editor of the newspaper opposing the building of a hazardous waste dump.

Medium

2. In which situation would the writer□s purpose be primarily to inform?

   ★ A. a report on AIDS in health class
   B. a children□s play performed in a forest
   C. a campaign poster for a candidate for mayor
   D. a petition from the student council to ban smoking in school

Read the passage below and answer the question.

The United States and Canadian governments are mounting a defense against a Russian invasion. No, the clock has not been turned back. These invaders are Asian gypsy moths, foliage-chomping insects that can cause billions of dollars in damage. Experts believe they entered North America from Russia last year in egg masses attached to grain vessels. The larger Asian gypsy moth is a more voracious feeder than the common North American strain and can feed on Pacific Northwest tree species. Unlike the flightless North American female, an Asian female can fly 20 miles between mating and egg-laying. The United States Health Inspection Service is barring from West Coast ports ships found carrying egg masses. The Tacoma and Portland areas, as well as Vancouver, British Columbia, have been sprayed with a biopesticide.

(*National Geographic*, July 1992)

High

3. Which group of words from the passage best reflects the writer□s tone?

   A. mounting, barring, sprayed
   B. egg masses, mating, egg-laying
   ★ C. invaders, foliage-chomping, voracious
   D. Canadian, Russian, Asian, North American

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 02)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the poem, "American Aristocracy," by John G. Saxe, and answer question 4.

Of all the notable things on earth,
The queerest one is pride of birth
Among our "fierce democracy!"
A bridge across a hundred years,
Without a prop to save it from sneers,
Not even a couple of rotten *peers*,
A thing for laughter, fleers and jeers,
Is American aristocracy.

English and Irish, French and Spanish,
Germans, Italians, Dutch and Danish,
Crossing their veins until they vanish
In one conglomeration.

So subtle a tangle of blood, indeed,
No Heraldry Harvey will ever succeed
In finding the circulation.

Depend upon it, my snobbish friend,
Your family thread you can't ascend,
Without good reason to apprehend
You may find it *waxed* at the farther end,
By some plebeian vocation;
Or worse than that, your boasted line
May end in a loop of a stronger twine,
That plagued some worthy relation.

High

4. Which line would be **most useful** in developing an argument concerning America as a genetic melting pot?

A. a bridge across a hundred years
★ B. crossing their veins until they vanish
C. no Heraldry Harvey will ever succeed
D. pride of birth among our "fierce democracy!"

High

5. The situation that would be **most appropriate** for a persuasive argument in a playful tone is

★ A. an advertisement for a breakfast cereal.
B. an announcement in the bulletin about recycling.
C. a phone call to the mayor's office about the homeless.
D. a letter to the President supporting national health care.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (ELA.9-12. 02)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level
		High

6. Which detail would be **most useful** in developing an argument concerning whether a new state highway should be built through the center of a city?

A. the source of funding for the highway—federal or state
B. the type of material used in construction of the highway
C. the distance from the city to the highway's eventual destination
★ D. the number of people and businesses that will have to be moved in order to make way for the highway

Read the passage below and answer question 7.

What I got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery, and a powerful vindication of human rights. The reading of these documents enabled me to utter my thoughts, and meet the arguments brought forward to sustain slavery; but while they relieved me of one difficulty they brought on another even more painful than the one of which I was relieved. The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest my enslavers. I could regard them in no other light than a band of successful robbers, who had left their homes and gone to Africa, and stolen us from our homes, and in a strange land reduced us to slavery. I loathed them as being the meanest as well as the most wicked of men. As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! That very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish.

(Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave*)

High

7. The phrase that **best** describes the author's purpose in making these remarks is

A. philosophical, in order to reflect on the history of slavery.
★ B. angry, in order to express his outrage at the history of slavery and slaveowners.
C. objective, in order to explain the history of slavery without expressing a personal opinion.
D. ironic, in order to explain how the reality of slavery is different from what the reader might think it is.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 04)

The student uses research process: selecting topic, formulating questions, identifying key words, choosing sources, skimming, paraphrasing, note-taking, organizing, summarizing, and presenting.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read information about a research project and will make a choice from a list of procedures as to the most effective way to prepare for a presentation.

The student will be given a research topic and will organize the necessary tasks in chronological order for the best way to complete the project in the clearest and most coherent manner.

The student will be given a passage and be asked to identify specific aspects (facts, assumptions, hypotheses, speculation, erroneous or unsupported statements) which would either strengthen or weaken a specified research topic.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the information below and answer the question.

You have been given the assignment to prepare a speech about the history of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Awards (Oscars), specifically relating to Best Actor, Best Actress, and Best Director, from 1927 to the present time. Because you know only about the most recent awards, it will be necessary to do some research to get the necessary information for your speech.

Medium

1. The **most efficient** procedure to follow in preparing for your speech about the Academy Awards would be to

   A. decide what specific data you need, choose key words and topic headings, enter these into the Internet, print out the hundreds of pages the search yields, and sift through the information until you find what you need.

   ★ B. make an outline of what you plan to present, review encyclopedia and topical references, organize the data to fit within the outline, write a brief summary of your findings, and practice the presentation in front of a mirror.

   C. check with friends about the movies they have seen and get their opinions about who should have won the awards, then write a summary of your findings, paraphrasing those parts with which you disagree, and give your presentation.

   D get videotapes of all the Acadamy Awards presentations and review them, fast-forwarding through the commercials; take notes as you view the tapes, organize your notes into a clear, crisp, concise presentation, and practice your speech three times.

Medium

2. Which of the following research procedures, in the **most efficient** chronological order, should be used in order to apply for college admission?

   A. Get list of colleges; get list of scholarships, discuss goals with guidance counselor; select college(s) and scholarship(s) for which you qualify; write letter(s) of inquiry.

   B. Get a list of colleges and visit each campus to see if they suit you; discuss your findings with the guidance counselor; get a list of scholarships and select all that apply to you; write letters of inquiry to the scholarship committees.

   C. Write letters of inquiry to colleges; select the colleges that reply; discuss the colleges with the guidance counselor; get a list of scholarships for which you qualify; write a second letter to the colleges to see if they will accept a scholarship.

   ★ D. Discuss goals with guidance counselor; get list of scholarships and select those for which you qualify; get list of colleges and select the ones for which you qualify; write letters of inquiry to the colleges and the scholarship committees.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 04)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level

Read this excerpt from "24 Hours in Space" and answer question 3.

There are separate Russian and American systems for recycling air and water. The Russians barely monitor the water in orbit, pointing to their healthy crew members as proof the system is working. Your fellow Americans take a top-of-the-line approach, providing ultrapure water cleaner than that in many U.S. cities.

Like the shuttle before it, the station uses air pressure to whisk water away from the human body or a sink's drain. This mixture of air and water doesn't settle into the easy order that it does under the influence of gravity. So separating the two requires a large centrifuge spinning at 6,000 rpm. It recovers 85 to 95 percent of the water in your urine leaving behind a pungent-smelling brine the color of ice tea. Instead of venting water overboard, as on the shuttle, the American system transforms the water into steam and condenses it to liquid again before additional stages of chemical, heat, and mechanical treatment. Then iodine is added to ensure that pipes and fixtures do not harbor bacteria from within the cabin.

You can taste the iodine. We know the water is clean analytically, and people who have tasted it say they could easily use it as their everyday water, but the main complaint is that it tastes medicinal.

Water consumption varies widely from culture to culture. Not until Sharon Lucid stayed aboard Mir did anyone realize that American astronauts typically drink more than twice as much water as Russian cosmonauts, who imbibe just 1 liter per day.

("24 Hours in Space" by Mark D. Uehling; *Popular Science*, May, 1998)

High

3. Which of these facts from the passage would be **most relevant** to use in a presentation about ecology and sociology?

★ A. Water consumption varies widely from culture to culture.
B. The main complaint about the water is that it tastes medicinal.
C. Air pressure is used to whisk water away from the human body.
D. Separating water and air requires a large certrifuge that spins at 6,000 rpm.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 05)

Identifies, comprehends, and summarizes the main and subordinate ideas of a written work.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read information from various sources (information from encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers, works of fiction, correspondence, manuals and handbooks, computer databases, poems, textbooks) on different topics (preferably topics of interest to many students).

The student will determine the purpose, tone, audience appeal, sequence of events, and main idea, and draw conclusions from the text provided.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 05)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the following poem and answer question 1.

The Rainy Day

The day is cold, and dark and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the moldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark and dreary;
It rains and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the moldering past,
But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

Medium

1. The implied main idea of this poem is that

A. the rain and wind never stop.
B. life is cold, and dark, and dreary.
★ C everyone has a bad day once in a while.
D. it is easier to live in the past rather than the present.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 05)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the following passage and answer question 2.

It goes a long way back, some twenty years. All my life I had been looking for something, and everywhere I turned someone tried to tell me what it was. I accepted their answers too, though they were often in contradiction and even self-contradictory. I was naive. I was looking for myself and asking everyone except myself questions which I, and only I, could answer. It took me a long time and much painful boomeranging of my expectations to achieve a realization everyone else appears to have been born with: That I am nobody but myself. But first I had to discover that I am an invisible man.

(Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*)

High

2. Which sentence **best** describes the theme of this passage?

A. The narrator realizes, after many years, that people think he is naive.
B. The narrator believes, after asking many questions, that he is invisible.
★ C. The narrator discovers, after a long and difficult search, that only he can know who he truly is.
D. The narrator realizes, after twenty years, that many people have helped him achieve his goals.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

On November 19, 1863, Abraham Lincoln gave a brief speech at the dedication of the national cemetery at Gettysburg. Read this speech and answer the question.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

High

3. In the speech above, what does President Lincoln mean when he says, "But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground."?

A. This ground should not be considered sacred because war is a terrible thing.

★ B. We do not have the right to dedicate this land; only those who fought and died here have that right.

C. We do not really know who was right and who was wrong; future historians will have to decide that.

D. These men died because of our failures. It would be immoral for us to pretend to honor them by dedicating a plot of ground.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 06)

Learns that words gather meaning from their context and carry connotation and denotation.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a hypothetical situation, in which particular words, phrases, or expressions convey meaning within the context of the situation.

The student is then asked to choose the response that most closely reflects the meaning within the context.

Sample Items	**★ Key**	**Cognitive Level**

Read the following paragraph and answer the question.

The townspeople considered Mr. Martinez to be a benevolent person because he donated money to the food bank. He also volunteered as a worker at the homeless shelter.

Low

1. According to the context, benevolent means

   A. shy.
   ★ B. generous.
   C. unpopular.
   D. lonely.

Low

2. The words determined, pig-headed, stubborn, and unreasonable all have similar meanings. Which word would a writer or speaker use to express admiration for a character's behavior?

   ★ A. determined
   B. pig-headed
   C. stubborn
   D. unreasonable

Low

3. In Act II of *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, many people have been arrested and charged with practicing witchcraft. John Proctor, in distress, says, "We are what we always were, but naked now."

   The word naked in the context of this statement means that

   A they are literally unclothed.
   ★ B. they will be forced to confess.
   C. their private lives will be revealed.
   D. their innocence will be impossible to prove.

Sample Items	**★ Key**	**Cognitive Level**

Medium

4. A senator was quoted as saying, "These tough new laws will send terrorists scuttling for their holes."

The **most likely** reason the senator chose these words would be to

★ A. condemn terrorists by comparing them to rats.
B. imply that terrorists live in run-down buildings.
C. try to hide his lack of specific knowledge about terrorism.
D. imply that the old laws were totally ineffective against terrorism.

Read the passage and answer question 5 below.

There are too many people who don't seem to care about the homeless. These uncaring people walk quickly away when approached, fearful that the dreaded malady of poverty and homelessness might be infectious.

High

5. What the writer is **most likely** trying to convey is that

A. most people are uncaring.
B. some homeless people spread diseases.
C. many people are walking faster these days.
★ D. many people are frightened by the idea of homelessness.

Read the passage and answer question 6 below.

"Don't you sass me, boy!" Grandmother's eyes burned fiercely at the young man. He lowered his eyes and scuffed his feet on the scarred, faded kitchen floor, but said nothing. Grandmother frowned, raised one eyebrow, then turned abruptly and slowly limped out of the room.

High

6. The writer is **most likely** trying to convey

★ A. Grandmother's controlled anger.
B. Grandmother's decision to leave the room.
C. problems of communication between generations.
D. the young man's lack of respect for his grandmother.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 07)

Distinguishes between fact and opinion.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a list of statements and will be asked to recognize which one is a fact/opinion.

The student will be given a passage to read and will be asked to determine which of the four sentences from that passage is an opinion (there should be only one clear opinion in the sentences from the passage).

The student will be given a passage to read and will be asked to determine which of the four sentences from the passage is a fact (there should be only one clear fact in the sentences from the passage).

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 07)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Low

1. Which of these statements is an opinion, rather than a fact?

   A. Jim: The concert is this evening.
   B. Susan: Jack said the orchestra is great.
   ★ C. Jim: Yes, it is really great.
   D. Susan: I don't know. I've never heard it play.

Low

2. Which statement is an opinion?

   ★ A. Hank: "These are the best ribs you've ever cooked."
   B. Jane: "I've cooked them by the same recipe I always use."
   C. Hank: "Let's serve them to my mother on Sunday."
   D. Jane: "We can if I buy more onions."

Low

3. Which statement is a fact?

   A Abraham Lincoln was loved by all those he served.
   ★ B. Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States of America.
   C. Abraham Lincoln was history's strongest defender of democratic freedoms.
   D. Had Abraham Lincoln not been assassinated, history would have taken a radically different path.

Read this passage in which the writer describes what he observed on the beach, and then answer question 4.

There were three people on the beach. Two of them, a man and a woman, were yelling loudly and gesturing broadly. The third, a woman, was lying a few feet away, taking a sunbath. Sometimes when the other two were particularly loud, she would look up from her book and stare at them for a moment or two. The other two didn't seem to care whether or not their argument was overheard. Finally, the sunbather got up and left. After a few more minutes, the man and woman jumped up and ran to their cars. They both drove off with their wheels screeching.

Medium

4. Which of these sentences is an opinion?

   ★ A. The other two didn't seem to care whether or not their argument was overheard.
   B. Two of them, a man and a woman, were yelling loudly and gesturing broadly.
   C. The third, a woman, was lying a few feet away, taking a sunbath.
   D. They both drove off with their wheels screeching.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read this passage and answer question 5.

As our cities grow and sprawl over the country, we need more rapid transit systems to accommodate the American commuter. In a 1991 survey, commuters reported spending two to three hours daily behind the wheels of their cars, 77% of them alone in the car. They spent an average of $1,500 a year for parking, plus $680 a year on insurance, compared to the average subway rider's cost of $360 during the same year in Washington, DC. The cost of fuel in the individual budget, the national balance of trade, and global pollution are more complex issues than we can calculate here. Nor do we have a way of determining the emotional energy expended during the two- or three-hour drive, but that should be added to the cost of driving a car to work or school. As a nation, we've been unable to pay for filling in our cities' potholes for at least the past 15 years, according to the Department of Transportation. This same department showed, in their January '92 report, that more metropolitan areas are showing an interest in federal matching funds for rapid transit.

Medium

5. Which statement from the passage is an opinion?

A. As our cities grow and sprawl over the country, we need more rapid transit systems to accommodate the American commuter.
★ B. The cost of fuel in the individual budget, the national balance of trade, and global pollution are more complex issues than we can calculate.
C. As a nation, we've been unable to pay for filling in our cities' potholes for at least the past 15 years, according to the Department of Transportation.
D. Nor do we have a way of determining the emotional energy expended during the two-or three-hour drive, but that should be added to the cost of driving a car to work or school.

Read this passage and answer question 6.

Most people prefer living in cities rather than out in the country. There are more stores and services available, and usually a greater selection of jobs. There are usually more people in cities, so there are more opportunities to make friends. Standards of education in city schools are higher than in country schools. People who live in cities have more entertainment sources□particularly theaters, restaurants, and television reception□and have shorter distances to travel when visiting friends. It is inconceivable that anyone would want to live anywhere but in a city.

High

6. Which of the following sentences is **most likely** a fact?

A. It is inconceivable that anyone would want to live anywhere but in a city.
B. Standards of education in city schools are higher than in country schools.
C. Most people prefer living in cities rather than out in the country.
★ D. There are usually more people in cities.

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English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 08)

Comprehends, develops, and uses specifics and generalizations.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a passage containing certain facts, then will be given a generalization about those facts, and will be asked to identify the detail in the passage that contradicts the generalization.

The student will be given a passage containing generalizations, then will be given a specific fact related to the generalizations, and will be asked to identify the detail in the passage that contradicts the specific.

The student will be given a passage describing a situation and including details about the character or behavior of an individual, and will be asked to describe the reasons behind the outcome described in the passage.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (L.A.9-12. 08)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and identify the generalization in the question.

My aunt is visiting from New York City this week. You should hear her. She talks so fast I can only catch every fourth word. And that's when I'm concentrating. Her tongue goes crazy as she rattles all those syllables out. I cry, "Slow down!" "That's nothing," she says. "All New Yorkers talk fast." She even says that Uncle Ron can talk circles around her.

Low

1. The generalization in this passage is

   A. You should hear her.
   B. "That's nothing," she says.
   ★ C. "All New Yorkers talk fast."
   D. She talks so fast I can only catch every fourth word.

Read the passage and answer the question.

Nothing is more delicious than a crunchy, chocolate candy bar. Late in the evening when the day's work is done, I hunger to sink my teeth into my favorite candy bar. I am partial to the ones that have thick, dark, rich chocolate layers outside and sweet caramel inside. Now if you add nuts to the combination, I am in heaven for about five minutes.

Low

2. Which statement from the passage is a generalization?

   ★ A. Nothing is more delicious than a crunchy, chocolate candy bar.
   B. Now if you add nuts to the combination, I am in heaven for about five minutes.
   C. Late in the evening when the day's work is done, I hunger to sink my teeth into my favorite candy bar.
   D. I am partial to the ones that have thick, dark, rich chocolate layers outside and sweet caramel inside.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and identify the specific content in the question.

Little is known about the species *laepiedextra monoglutimate*, an insect so rare that it has never been seen. Only trace evidence of its existence can be found in the rotting trunks of the *bunjolo rapilinstra* tree, in isolated sections of tropical rain forests. Professor A.B. Rajpur, who teaches botany at the Royal Academy of Ankara, says, "We cannot conceive of the unique life styles experienced by these presumably rare and exotic creatures." Many of Professor Rajpur's colleagues tend to support him in this matter, but others feel that the real issue has been overlooked: Why have the *laepiedextra monoglutimate* been so reluctant to make contact with *homo sapiens*? To this, Professor Rajpur states, with his usual calculated demeanor, "The *laepiedextra monoglutimate* will undoubtedly seek us out when they determine the need."

Low

3. The specific in this passage is

A. his usual calculated demeanor.
B. an insect so rare it has never been seen.
★ C. teaches botany at the Royal Academy of Ankara.
D. will undoubtedly seek us out when they determine the need.

Read the passage and answer question 4.

Learning a foreign language can be beneficial. The obvious benefit is that you can communicate with more people. Here in North America, Spanish and French are spoken by Mexican-Americans and French-Canadians while Japanese and Chinese are spoken by many immigrants from Southeast Asia. In foreign countries, many people do speak English, but you will learn more about them and their lives if you speak their language.

On one visit to Martinique, my sister and I were invited to our driver's home for supper because we could speak French. We learned Martinique customs and tasted Martinique dishes we could never have experienced in the tourist's hotel. Knowing another language can even help you better understand English. From studying a foreign language you learn how any language, including your own, works. And some foreign vocabulary will give you clues to your own language. Knowing that a "sabot" is a French word for "wooden shoe" could help you remember that "sabotage" means putting obstacles (like wooden shoes) in the way.

Take the time to help yourself communicate by learning a foreign language.

Medium

4. Which generalization is supported by the information in the passage above?

★ A. Learning a foreign language can be useful.
B. The people of Martinique are all very friendly.
C. English cannot be compared with other languages.
D. Americans traveling abroad should help foreigners learn English.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 08)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read this passage and answer question 5.

A high school student, Jeff, is being considered for competition in a state-sponsored science contest, which only a few students are invited to enter. He would have to submit a project on an assigned topic and meet a strict deadline. Jeff has always been interested in science and has even won a contest that he entered independently. He loves working on projects at home, but often when he turns in projects at school, they give evidence of having been hastily done. He has told his friends that the material they are studying in science class is really elementary and that it really bores him. When the science teacher decides which students will be allowed to enter a project in the contest, Jeff is not included.

High

5. Which of the following is the **most likely** reason that Jeff was not allowed to compete in the contest?

A. The teacher believes that Jeff is not at all interested in science.
B. The teacher thinks that it would not be fair for Jeff to enter, since he is so much better at science than other people.
★ C. The teacher believes that Jeff might not be interested in the topic that would be assigned and might not meet the deadline.
D. The teacher knows that Jeff could do well in the contest, but she doesn't think he cares enough about science to enter.

Read the passage and answer question 6.

Michael has applied for the City Council Scholarship, which would pay for tuition and books for a year at the community college. His single parent does not make enough money at the phone company to send Michael to college, and Michael has not saved enough money from his custodial job on campus. He's such a quiet person no one knows it, but Michael has earned a 3.6 in his college-prep classes in high school. He can get good recommendations from language arts and physics teachers to say that he applies himself to his studies.

High

6. What is the **most likely** reason Michael will get the scholarship?

A. His interests range from the arts to the sciences.
B. His teachers say he's a quiet, well-behaved student.
C. He already has a connection to the college in his job.
★ D. His scholastic record shows him to be a successful student.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 09)

Acquires new vocabulary through reading and listening; demonstrates progress through speaking and writing.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read a passage with unfamiliar or difficult vocabulary and identify the words through the context in which they appear.

The student will be given a list of words taken from a thesaurus, with their synonyms, and will be asked to choose the most appropriate synonym to complete a sentence, statement, or phrase.

The student will be given a sentence containing an obscure or unusual word, the meaning of which can be deduced from the context. The student will then review the four answer choices which contain the same word in different contexts, and identify the sentence which is most similar to the prompt sentence.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer the question.

"If you don't git up, Johnny, I won't give you a bite to eat."

The threat had no effect on the boy. He clung stubbornly to sleep, fighting for its oblivion as the dreamer fights for his dream. The boy's hands loosely clenched themselves, and he made feeble, spasmodic blows in the air. These blows were intended for his mother, but she betrayed practiced familiarity in avoiding them as she shook him roughly by the shoulder.

"Lemme 'lone!"

It was a cry that began, muffled, in the deeps of sleep; that swiftly rushed upward, like a wail, into passionate belligerence, and then died away and sank down into an inarticulate whine. It was a bestial cry, as of a soul in torment, filled with infinite protest and pain. But she did not mind. She was a sad-eyed, tired-faced woman, and she had grown used to this task, which she repeated every day of her life. She got a grip on the bedclothes and tried to strip them down; but the boy, ceasing his punching, clung to them desperately. In a huddle at the foot of the bed, he still remained covered. Then she tried dragging the bedding to the floor. The boy opposed her. She braced herself. Hers was the superior weight, and the boy and bedding, the former instinctively following the latter in order to shelter against the chill of the room that bit into his body.

As he toppled on the edge of the bed it seemed that he must fall head-first to the floor. But consciousness fluttered up in him. He righted himself and for a moment perilously balanced. Then he struck the floor with his feet. On the instant his mother seized him by the shoulders and shook him. Again his fists struck out, this time with more force and directness. At the same time his eyes opened. She released him. He was awake.

"All right," he mumbled.

("The Apostate," by Jack London)

Medium

1. In the context of the second paragraph, spasmodic **most likely** means

★ A. sudden, occasional outbursts of energy.
B. a convulsion brought on by muscle contraction.
C. a boxing term related to throwing punches at the opponent.
D. reflexive actions, following severe stress or injury to the body.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 09)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Review the list of vocabulary words and their definitions, then answer the question.

abandon. *v.* forsake; desert; give up; complete surrender.
affront. *v.* intentional insult; offensive confrontation.
butt. *v.* to hit or push something with the head or horns; to be set end to end. *n.* a target; a person who is the object of ridicule or contempt; the larger or thicker end of something; unburned part of a cigarette; buttocks; a large cask.
credibility. *n.* capable of being believed; believable; worthy of confidence or trust; reliable.
culpability. *adj.* responsibility for wrong or error; deserving of blame.
drain. *v.* to draw off liquid; to empty; to exhaust or consume; to spend emotionally or physically.
n. a pipe or tube used to convey liquid.
infamous. *adj.* having a very bad reputation; grossly shocking; detestable.
prestige. *n.* status through success, renown, or wealth; power to command admiration by others.
reckless. *adj.* heedless or careless; headstrong; rash; having no regard for consequences; wild; uncontrolled..
resources. *n.* something that can be turned to for support or help; an available supply that can be drawn upon when needed; an ability to deal with a situation effectively.
sarcastic. *adj.* a personal expression that is bitter, cutting, or derisive; open taunting or ridicule.
undermine. *v.* to dig a tunnel or mine; to weaken by wearing away at a base or foundation; to injure or impair.

High

2. In the context of the paragraph below, which of the following phrases should be **most appropriately** used to complete the last sentence?

This matter has gone too far. We shall be the butt of every joke and sarcastic remark that the Free Press can use to undermine our cause. What can we do to stop this _____?

A. drain on our resources
★ B. loss of prestige and credibility
C. affront on our personal culpability
D. infamous attitude of reckless abandon

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 09)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the sentence below and answer the question.

Without thinking, Gregory lifted the huge boulder and hurled it toward the charging bull, confident that his aim was true.

High

3. Which of the following sentences uses the underlined word in a similar context as that which appears in the above sentence?

A. This morning my battery was dead, and I had to get it charged.
B. It cost almost one hundred dollars, but I charged it to my credit card.
★ C. The cavalry charged up the hill, intent on capturing the ancient fortress.
D. Charged with excitement, they ran all the way to the house, laughing hysterically.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 10)

Uses literal comprehension skills (e.g., sequencing, explicitly stated main idea).

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a passage in which there is an explicitly stated topic sentence, which may be at the beginning, middle, or end of the passage. The passage must also include three or four distinct details, which are used to develop the topic.

The student will be given a passage in which one of these modes of development is used:

- detail helping to define the main idea,
- detail used in comparison or contrast to the main idea,
- detail classifying or dividing the main idea into parts, or,
- detail establishing a cause/effect relationship to the main idea,

either as overall development or with one or two supporting details. Then the student can be asked to describe the relationship between the main idea and a particular supporting detail, or to identify the mode used to develop the passage.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read this paragraph about the Germans' use of submarines during World War I and answer the following two questions.

Early in the war, Germany began to use submarines to keep ships from reaching Britain and France, so as to stop supplies from flowing into these countries. German naval leaders wanted to prevent other countries from supporting the war effort so that Britain and France would have difficulty in continuing to fight. Since submarines could not fight well on the surface, German submarine crews used surprise against other ships, both merchant and cruise ships, attacking them without warning. In spite of the fact that international law required them to save non-combatants if possible, German commanders made no attempt to rescue people who had been passengers on the ships they attacked. As a result, Americans heard many horrible stories about what submarines were doing. When Americans began to die in encounters with German submarines on the Atlantic, American public opinion turned against Germany.

Medium

1. Which sentence **best** describes the relationship between the Germans' use of submarines to stop other ships from reaching Britain and France and the fact that American public opinion turned against Germany?

A. American public opinion is contrasted with German public opinion on the subject of using submarines against merchant and cruise ships.

B. The reference to American public opinion turning against Germany explains how American opinion was divided about the use of submarines.

★ C. The way the Germans used submarines, causing the deaths of noncombatants, had the effect of turning American public opinion against Germany.

D. The use of submarines to stop ships from reaching France and England is defined as horrible by the fact that American public opinion turned against Germany.

High

2. How does the supporting detail, "Since submarines could not fight well on the surface, German submarine crews used surprise against other ships, both merchant and cruise ships, attacking them without warning," develop the main idea?

A. The detail is in contrast to the main idea.

B. The detail develops the main idea by dividing it into parts.

★ C. The detail shows a cause and effect development of the main idea.

D. The detail helps to develop the main idea through definition of the tactic.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 10)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level

Read the following letter and answer the two questions that follow on the next page.

To: Edward Carrington
Paris, January 16, 1787

The tumults in America, I expected would have produced in Europe an unfavorable opinion of our political state. But it has not. On the contrary, the small effect of those tumults seems to have given more confidence in the firmness of our governments. The interposition of the people themselves on the side of government has had a great effect on the opinion here.

I am persuaded myself that the good sense of the people will always be found to be the best army. They may be led astray for a moment, but will soon correct themselves. The people are the only censors of their governors: and even their errors will tend to keep these to the true principles of their institution. To punish these errors too severely would be to suppress the only safeguard of the public liberty.

The way to prevent these irregular interpositions of the people is to give them full information of their affairs thro' the channel of the public papers, and to contrive that those papers should penetrate the whole mass of the people. The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them.

I am convinced that those societies (as the Indians) which live without government enjoy in their general mass an infinitely greater degree of happiness than those who live under European governments. Among the former, public opinion is in the place of law, and restrains morals as powerfully as laws ever did anywhere. Among the latter, under pretense of governing they have divided their nations into two classes, wolves and sheep. I do not exaggerate. This is a true picture of Europe.

Cherish therefore the spirit of our people, and keep alive their attention. Do not be too severe upon their errors, but reclaim them by enlightening them. If once they become inattentive to the public affairs, you and I, and Congress, and Assemblies, judges and governors shall all become wolves. It seems to be the law of our general nature, in spite of individual exceptions; and experience declares that man is the only animal which devours his own kind, for I can apply no milder term to the governments of Europe, and to the general prey of the rich on the poor.

(Thomas Jefferson, "Letter to Edward Carrington")

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

High

3. According to Jefferson, what effectively takes the place of law in societies without government?

A. violence
B. newspapers
★ C. public opinion
D. outside intervention

High

4. Jefferson believes that erroneous opinions are **best** corrected through

A. censorship.
★ B. enlightenment.
C. indifference.
D. ridicule.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 11)

Uses inferential comprehension skills (e.g., predictions, comparisons, conclusions, implicitly stated main idea).

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a passage, sentence, or observation, chosen from the events of everyday life□subjects with which the student should be familiar□whose purpose is either to describe, to inform, or to persuade. These passages will not have an explicitly stated main idea, and the student will be asked to identify the implicit main idea from a list of sentences following. An introduction preceding the passage must describe the topic addressed, but not the main idea.

In addition,

the student will be given a sentence that provides a limited amount of information on a given topic and will be asked to recognize inferences that might be drawn from it;

the student will be given observations made by an individual and will be asked to identify conclusions that might be drawn;

the student will be given a list of facts and asked to recognize the most appropriate generalization from a list following;

the student will be given a sentence or sentences used in an advertisement or in another persuasive situation and will be asked to identify the propaganda techniques used;

the student will be given a passage which describes a persuasive situation and will be asked to explain the propaganda technique used.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the following paragraph (about a mining company's methods of mining the coal in a particular valley), which has no explicit topic sentence, and answer question 1.

To get to the coal in the valley, several bulldozers were used to move tons of earth. Mountains were formed where there had been no mountains; and deep holes, which later filled with water, were also created. All of the tall trees, some of them quite old, were ripped up and hauled away. Ground vegetation□grasses, bushes, and small trees□was also totally eliminated. As a result, the topsoil that was left behind is constantly eroding, and the landscape looks like a war zone.

Medium

1. Which sentence describes the implicit idea of the preceding paragraph?

A. The mining company's operation created many new lakes in the valley.
★ B. The mining company's operations destroyed the landscape in the valley.
C. The mining company produced a great deal of much-needed coal from its operations in the valley.
D. The operations of the mining company changed the landscape greatly, but the overall effect was beautiful.

Read the following statement and answer question 2.

Because the original church building was severely damaged by a tornado, a new building was put up on exactly the same site last year at this time.

Medium

2. Which of the following inferences can be made from the preceding statement?

A. An addition to the original church building was built after a tornado a year ago.
B. The original church building is still standing as a memorial to the tornado that occurred a year ago.
★ C. The original tornado-damaged church building could not be repaired and so was torn down at least a year ago.
D. The members of the church did not like the original church building, and the tornado gave them an excuse to build a new one.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the following observations made by a resident of Atlanta, Georgia, and answer the question.

There is a moving van in front of the large house next door, and a station wagon is parked in the driveway. Both the car and the van have license plates from Montana.

Medium

3. Which of the following conclusions can be drawn from the above observations?

★ A. A family from Montana is moving into the house next door.
B. The new furniture that the people next door ordered is being delivered.
C. Someone from the family next door has gotten a job with a moving company.
D. The family which has been living in the house next door is moving to Montana.

Read the following and answer the question.

An advertisement for blue jeans includes a picture of a teenager surrounded by a group of friends and reads, "Stay in with the IN crowd. Wear 608 jeans. Only $99."

Medium

4. The conclusion which can be **most reasonably** drawn from the facts in the advertisement is that the reader

A. desires to save money, by offering jeans at a reasonable price.
B. needs to be different from others, by offering a unique product.
C. needs to buy good-quality clothes, by examining the value of the advertised jeans.
★ D. needs to be accepted socially, by implying that the jeans will make her or him one of the crowd.

Medium

5. An advertisement for videos shows racks and racks of videotapes and reads, "All your favorites for half price, this month only."

The writer of this advertisement is appealing to the reader's

A. need to be different, by offering a unique product.
★ B. desire to save money, by offering videos at a reasonable price.
C. need to buy quality products, by stressing the value of the advertised videos.
D. need to be socially accepted, by implying the videos will make him or her one of the crowd.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the following paragraph and answer questions 6 and 7.

The governor of your state wishes to make a speech on the subject of conservation of natural resources. He is particularly concerned about the fact that landfills where garbage is deposited are rapidly filling up, and he hopes to convince the state's residents to help with the conservation effort. When he makes the speech, he is casually dressed and is filmed sitting in his own living room. During the speech, he shows the viewer the steps he has taken to recycle garbage in the governor's mansion.

Medium

6. The writer of this speech is appealing to

A. the landfill operators, who are worried about lack of space.
B. the state legislators, who must pass laws about waste disposal.
★ C. the state's residents, who generate a high percentage of the waste.
D. The Environmental Protection Agency, which must enforce the laws.

High

7. Assuming the governor was using a propaganda technique, choose the **most likely** reason for the use of such a casual setting.

A. The studio where he usually films his speeches was unavailable.
B. The governor was not feeling well and was unable to leave his house to make the speech.
C. The governor was implying that he is the only person in the state who does any recycling.
★ D. The governor was implying that it is the responsibility of everyone in the state, no matter who he or she is, to start recycling at home.

Read the passage and answer the question.

The governor wants to make a speech about the state's transportation budget. She wants those funds to be allocated to bridge and road repair and construction, rather than rapid transit. She has the speech filmed underneath an old bridge, showing the crumbling cement work and rusty iron structure. She wears a hard hat during the delivery.

High

8. What is the **most likely** reason for the governor's choice of setting for her speech?

A. The governor was suggesting that she is a risk taker.
B. The governor enjoys giving speeches in unusual places.
C. It was a cost-cutting method, saving the rent of a studio.
★ D. The setting showed the seriousness of the transportation problem.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 12)

Defines unfamiliar words by using appropriate structural analysis skills including prefixes, suffixes, root words, and context clues.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given sentences or paragraphs containing vocabulary words relevant to the context but possibly unfamiliar to the student, and the student will need to determine the meaning by context clues.

The student will put in order a scrambled sentence (lines of words, capitalized when appropriate and with correct punctuation). Care must be taken that the sentence structure and vocabulary are of a suitable level and that all grammatically possible configurations are allowed.

The student will choose the grammatically correct verb or possessive form, spelling (from standard spelling rules), or punctuation within a given passage of one or more sentences.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer the questions.

There was no real reason for the men to stay. It was apparent that the fight was over, and that everything was under control. But the two men refused to disperse, even when the harried officer gave them a direct order to leave.

"Ain't much left of him, is there?" one man queried.

"He had no reason to provoke Big John like that," replied the other. "Nobody in his right mind would keep on agitating Big John after he told him to leave him alone."

"I'd suggest you men move on," the officer said quietly.

The two men stared at the young officer, saw the raw determination in his piercing eyes, and slowly walked away from the area.

Low

1. Within the context of the passage, the word disperse means

   A. to distribute.
   B. to separate.
   C. to inform.
★ D. to leave.

Low

2. In paragraph 2, the author uses the word "queried." What other word might the author have used which means the same as queried?

★ A. asked
   B. noted
   C. said
   D. shared

Low

3. What does the word provoke **most likely** mean, as used in the above passage?

   A. to avoid getting involved
★ B. to stir or arouse to action
   C. to follow through with a project
   D. to create excitement and enthusiasm

Sample Items	**★ Key**	**Cognitive Level**

Medium

4. Dear John, is an example of the salutation or greeting in a

   A. resume.
   B. business letter.
★ C. friendly letter.
   D. formal invitation acceptance.

Medium

5. Find the capitalization error in the following sentence.

   Wednesday, July 10, 1940, was the hottest day of Summer, if not the year.

   A. Year should be capitalized.
   B. July should not be capitalized.
★ C. Summer should not be capitalized.
   D. Wednesday should not be capitalized.

Read the following sentence and answer question 6.

Paul didn't get no sleep the night before his driving test; he had a nightmare about hitting a deer, wrecking the car, and failing the test.

Medium

6. What revision, if any, is needed?

   A. Change the semicolon after driving test to a comma.
   B. Change *license* to lisence.
★ C. Change *no* to any
   D. No correction is needed.

Read the passage below and answer question 7.

All the lions began to groom their fur. The smallest cub started to lick its paws, too.

Medium

7. What revision, if any, is needed?

   A. Change *their* to *they're*.
   B. Change *its* to *it's*.
   C. Change *too* to *to*.
★ D. No revision is needed.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the following passage, then answer question 8.

There weren't much use for me to try to make amends, seein' as how them people never gave me no slack, so I just ignored them and hoped they'd do the same. No such luck! Darned if they didn't come right back into my face and tried to start the whole thing all over again. Of course I hadn't no intention of backing down—that ain't my style as you know—so it weren't but a few seconds that we was scufflin' and sluggin' down in the dirt. I give a good account of myself, but did get a busted tooth in the bargain.

High

8. Choose the grammatically correct form for each underlined word in the passage.

A. wasn't not, hadn't got, done gave
B. were not, didn't have, done give
C. weren't not, haven't, just give
★ D. wasn't, had, gave

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 14)

Draws reasoned conclusions from various sources.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

Given a passage containing a conclusion, the student will recognize the conclusion word for word.

Given information from any print source, the student will identify the most reasonable conclusion that can be drawn.

The student will be given a list of sentences from a single process analysis and asked

- how best to arrange them to lead to a particular result, and,
- how the final result might best be described.

The student will be given a passage to read and will be asked to choose, from a list of sentences, the one sentence missing from that passage; then the student will be asked to identify, from a list of positions, the appropriate position for that sentence.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer question 1.

Most people prefer to live in single-family dwellings, rather than in a duplex, or a condominium, or any type of multiple housing where many families are herded together like cattle in a stockyard. People who are lucky enough to have their own home□no matter the size of the house or the property□are less likely to feel the pressure of their neighbors than are those whose walls adjoin the apartment or living unit of someone who is rowdy or insensitive to the effect their noise has on others. I would almost rather live by myself in a cave than be in housing without any real privacy.

Low

1. Which statement from the passage is a valid conclusion?

★ A. I would almost rather live by myself in a cave than be in housing without any real privacy.
B. Neighbors are insensitive to the effect their noise has on others.
C. Most people prefer to live in a single-family dwelling.
D. Families are herded together like cattle in a stockyard.

Read the passage and answer question 2.

Moonchild gazed sadly into the glowing embers, unaware that Red Dog was in the shadows behind her. She stirred the dying fire, hearing only the sharp snap of the sudden flare of burning twigs as the moisture within them sizzled and popped, and the insistent voices inside her head, now almost screaming, that she must leave this place at once. She startled to her feet, kicked sand on the guttering flames, and raced into the unknown darkness, oblivious to the noise of her movement through the brush or of Red Dog's silent pursuit.

Medium

2. In this excerpt from *The Wooing of Moonchild,* by Priscilla Witherspoon, which of the following conclusions can **most reasonably** be drawn?

A. A little girl has lost her pet dog and is out in the woods looking for him.
B. It is dangerous to build a fire in the forest when animals are lurking behind the trees.
C. It is not a good idea to be alone in the wilderness at night when being stalked by the unknown.
★ D. A young woman has been cast out by her tribe, and the man who loves her is making sure she is safe.

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English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 14)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

The following two statements are related: the first question asks for a logical organization of facts, and the second question asks for a conclusion based on the events described in the first question.

Medium

3. Organize the following events which led up to this result: The cat ruined my new dress.

1) I could not get the dirty water out of my dress.
2) The cat jumped on the table and knocked over a lamp.
3) The dirty water fell on the chair where a dress was lying.
4) The lamp's cord slid across the table, turning over a vase with dirty water in it.

A. 4, 3, 2, 1
B. 2, 3, 4, 1
★ C. 2, 4, 3, 1
D. 3, 1, 2, 4

Medium

4. This series of events in the preceding question suggests that the woman's dress was ruined because

A. the cat jumped on the dress.
B. the lamp's cord was too long.
C. the woman forgot to hang up her dress.
★ D. the dirty water left a permanent stain on the dress.

Read the following passage and answer question 5.

(1) Finally I was going home. (2) I had spent the past year traveling around the United States. (3) Then I stayed with an old family friend in New York City; it was May, good weather for walking everywhere. (4) For the summer I worked on Mackinac Island in Lake Huron: lots of horses and horseflies and good friends. (5) I went with one of those friends out to San Francisco in September, helping her drive across the West. (6) In California, I hit the old film studios and UCLA campuses, taking the bus from hostel to hostel.

High

5. Logically, the preceding passage is incomplete. Which of these sentences has been left out of the narrative?

A. It would be good to relax in my own bedroom again.
B. May is probably a perfect month in any town, with baseball getting into full swing and gardens spurting growth and bloom.
C. Mackinac Island sure was a contrast to New York City: no cars are allowed on the island, so transportation is by horses or bicycle.
★ D. I started by taking Amtrak up to Washington, D.C, where I stayed with my aunt and spent weeks in the Smithsonian Institution complex.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 14)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

The following two statements are related: the first question asks for a logical organization of facts, and the second question asks for a conclusion based on the events described in the first question.

1) The house finally quieted into sleep. 2) Tom and Huck silently put their clothes on and tied their shoes around their necks. 3) They climbed out the window onto the roof. 4) Once on the ground, they put on their shoes and ran down to the river. 5)There Dan and Harry were waiting with the raft. 6) Finally, they pushed out into the current on their next moonlit adventure.

High

6. Logically, the preceding passage is incomplete. Which of these sentences has been left out of the narrative?

A. Dan and Harry waved to them as they floated downriver.
B. They'd poled the raft right under the sand bank where nobody could see them.
C. They pulled warm sweaters over their heads and thick wool pants up their legs.
★ D. Carefully they crept across the shingles down to the edge, leaving a four-foot drop to earth.

High

7. Where would you place the missing sentence you identified above to make the narrative logically complete?

A. between sentence 2 and sentence 3
★ B. between sentence 3 and sentence 4
C. between sentence 5 and sentence 6
D. after sentence 6

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 14)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level

Read the passage below and answer question 8.

1) Sandra followed James around the halls for a couple of days. 2) She didn't get close enough to talk to him, only to watch where he went. 3) When she recognized his patterns, she began to walk the same halls and occasionally say, "Hi." 4) Weeks later, when he was saying "Hi" back, she was ready. 5) He looked at her like he'd seen her somewhere but couldn't remember where. 6) "Let's see," he answered, "what's your name?"

High

8. Where should you place the following sentence in order to make the narrative logically complete?

"James," she stepped up to him boldly, "will you go to the Sadie Hawkins dance with me?"

A. between sentences 1 and 2
B. between sentences 2 and 3
C. between sentences 3 and 4
★ D. between sentences 4 and 5

Read the passage and answer question 9.

1) The day of the car wash was perfect: warm and not too sunny. 2) Everybody would want a car washed today. 3) We set up an assembly line to be as efficient as we could. 4) Al and Will wet down the cars with hoses. 5) Then the hoses washed all the soap off. 6) While Enrique, Jill, and I wiped off the water, Jerome and Barb cleaned the inside carpeting and dashboard.

High

9. Where should you place the following sentence in order to make the narrative logically complete?

Brian and Roshanda followed quickly with soapy sponges and towels.

A. between sentences 2 and 3
B. between sentences 3 and 4
★ C. between sentences 4 and 5
D. between sentences 5 and 6

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 15)

Writes Standard American English sentences with correct verb forms, punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms and other mechanics, word choice, and spelling.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read an essay or passage which contains errors in the usage of Standard American English, such as incorrect sentence structure, incorrect language (such as words, phrases, or sentences out of context or incorrectly used), and/or incorrect forms of grammar (such as punctuation, verb and plural forms, and possessives).

The student will select one of three given prompts, and then write grammatically correct sentences or passages as directed, observing all rules of correct sentence structure.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 15)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer the questions.

We awtin' of never spent that money on foolishness, but we did it because of the ways we was brought up. No body ain't got no say of why we does whut we decides to do, nor does anybuddy have to agree with whut we does. If you was to reallie understand whut its like to be activated by the guys on the neckts block, than you could of knowed why we was so grievous and upset.

Medium

1. Which of the following is the most appropriate use of Standard American English?

A. We oughten'd have spent that money on foolishness.
★ B. We shouldn't have spent that money on foolishness.
C. We should not of spent that money on foolishness.
D. We ought not of spent that money on foolishness.

Medium

2. Which of the following is the **most appropriate** form of the word <u>its</u> in the third sentence of the passage?

A. its'
★ B. it's
C. is's
D. its

Medium

3. Choose the sentence structure below which **best** reflects the use of Standard American English.

A. We done it because of the ways we were brought up.
B. We done it because of the ways we was brought up.
★ C. We did it because of the way we were brought up.
D. We did it because of the way we was brought up.

Sample Items ★ **Key Cognitive Level**

Medium

4. Choose the sentence structure below which **best** reflects the use of Standard American English.

   A. Nobody don't have the right to say why we do what we decides to do.
   B. Nobody has got the right to say why we does what we decides to do.
   C. Nobody don't got the right to say why we do what we decide to do.
★ D. Nobody has the right to say why we do what we decide to do.

High

5. Identify the word or phrase in column one that is used incorrectly in the passage, and then choose the correct word to replace it, from column two.

★	A.	activated	aggravated
	B	foolishness	non-essential
	C.	understand	know
	D.	upset	unsettled

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 17)

Uses language appropriate to situation and audience.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a hypothetical situation and will identify specified phrases or sentences as appropriate or inappropriate (i.e., Standard American English, colloquial English, inappropriate English usage, or slang) to the situation.

The student will be given a hypothetical situation and will identify the appropriate sentence which best reflects the speaker and the audience to which the message is being given.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: All Strands (LA.9-12. 15)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer question 1.

On Hallowe'en night, you and your best friend have to take your little brother trick-or-treating. You all bring some goodies home, but your little brother got the most and doesn't want to share. You say to him, "How come you're so stingy?"

Low

1. In choosing that particular expression, you are using

★ A. English slang.
B. colloquial English.
C. inappropriate English.
D. Standard American English.

Read the passage and answer question 2.

You arrive at school to pick up your little brother. You take his hand and begin the long, cold walk home. Just as you turn the corner at Benson's Carry-Out, you see DeWayne Watson staring you straight in the face. You turn and walk in the opposite direction, clutching your brother's hand. Your brother exclaims, "What's up with you, anyway? You're hurting me!"

Low

2. In choosing the expression, "What's up with you, anyway?", your brother is using

★ A. English slang.
B. colloquial English.
C. inappropriate English.
D. Standard American English.

Low

3. Dear Martha, is an example of the salutation or greeting in a

★ A personal letter.
B. technical paper.
C. formal invitation
D. business correspondence.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the letter and answer the question.

Dear Sir,

This letter is in reference to an incident that occurred last Friday at school. My purse was taken and searched by a teacher. My permission was neither asked nor volunteered. What happened to my right of privacy? Students have no rights in this school!

Medium

4. Because of the level of usage, you can assume the writer's audience is her

   A. classmate.
   B. friend.
   C. parent.
★ D. principal.

Medium

5. The vice-principal is upset because a group of seniors did not let him know that they had been harassed and threatened after a basketball game by students from their rival school. Using Standard American English in an official letter to each senior, the vice-principal's **most appropriate** expression would be:

   A. You all should of let me know the info.
   B. You guys darn well should of let me know.
★ C. You should have reported the incident to me.
   D. You people should've told me about the threats.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking; Writing/Usage/Grammar (LA.9-12. 19)

Writes for many purposes including, but not limited to, personal writing (journals, diaries, stories, poems), social writing (friendly letters, thank-you notes, invitations), academic writing (themes, reports, essays, analyses, critiques), and business writing (letters, memos, and applications).

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read a brief passage and determine the purpose the author intended.

The student will review excerpts which represent various writing styles (formal, informal, technical) and determine what style is used.

The student will read a passage and determine the audience for which the passage was intended. The student will identify examples of clear, crisp, concise writing (or unclear, ragged, verbose writing) from passages or paragraphs, which reflect various purposes for writing.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer questions 1-3.

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today. . . .

(Martin Luther King, Jr. August, 1963)

Medium

1. Dr. King's purpose in writing and making this speech is to

   A. inform the audience that his four children had good character.
   B. express his concern about the Alabama governor's speech pattern.
   ★ C. affirm that the efforts of the Civil Rights movement would succeed.
   D. create an illusion that only in his dreams could these events happen.

Medium

2. For which audience does Dr. King address the above speech?

   A. the citizens of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi
   B. the children of former slaves and slaveholders
   C. all the people living in the United States
   ★ D. all the people in the world

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking; Writing/Usage/Grammar (LA.9-12. 19)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level
		Medium

3. Which of the following writing styles is used in Dr. King's speech?

A. conciliatory, to influence the audience to accept the existing conditions
★ B. inspirational, to uplift and encourage people of all backgrounds
C. critical, to demean and dehumanize the governor of Alabama
D. inflammatory, to incite the audience to violent action

High

4. Which of the following sentences is the **best** example of clear, crisp, concise writing?

A. How is it possible, given the extensive research and design techniques found in the manual, that the critical acclaim for disparity is no longer in vogue?
B. None of the people who were here and are no longer here have completed their tasks, but have not been able to express their concerns.
★ C. Most of them wandered aimlessly in circles, weary, staggering, even falling, but they refused to ask for help or relief of any kind.
D. Where predators lurk are also those who seek such adventurous escapades that they move quickly and serenely through the mazes.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 20)

Gains insight into human behavior from the study of literature.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be asked to identify an example of human behavior from literature.

The student will be given a description of a character in his/her situation (e.g , escape, greed, pride, love, fantasizing, manipulation, success, failure, loneliness, yearning), and asked to choose another character in a parallel situation.

The student will be asked to write a short description (150 words or less) comparing the situation of a real person to that of a character from fiction (literature, movies, television, music); an example will be provided for this question.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 20)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer question 1.

In one of Langston Hughes's short stories, "Thank you, Ma'am," a would-be purse-snatcher is caught by his victim. She takes the young thief to her home, makes him wash his face and brush his hair, leaves her purse on the table, and feeds him a hot meal.

Medium

1. Which action indicates she trusts him?

★ A. leaves her purse out
B feeds him a hot meal
C. makes him wash his face
D. makes him brush his hair

Read the description of these fictitious characters and look for similarities in their situations.

An old fisherman, his strength failing, challenges nature by sailing alone far out into the Caribbean Sea to catch a big fish.

High

2. His situation is **most similar** to that of

★ A. a man, recently arrived in the far North, who braves -75°F weather on the Yukon trail looking for timber for shelter.
B. a family which loses its farm to the dust storms during the Great Depression and travels across the west toward California, looking for a better life.
C. a grandfather, whose life's goal of leading wagon trains out to the Pacific Ocean is accomplished and who has nothing to do but talk about his past glory.
D. a Native American, forced to go to the Bureau of Indian Affairs school, who rebels and becomes a lonely champion bronco-buster in the Madison Square Garden Rodeo.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 20)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer question 3.

Once upon a sunny morning a man who sat in a breakfast nook looked up from his scrambled eggs to see a white unicorn with a gold horn quietly cropping the roses in the garden. The man went up to the bedroom where his wife was still asleep and woke her.

"There's a unicorn in the garden," he said. "Eating roses." She opened one unfriendly eye and looked at him. "The unicorn is a mythical beast," she said, and turned her back on him. The man walked slowly downstairs and out into the garden. The unicorn was still there; he was now browsing among the tulips. "Here, unicorn," said the man, and he pulled up a lily and gave it to him. The unicorn ate it gravely.

(James Thurber, "The Unicorn in the Garden")

High

3. Thurber characterizes the man as

A. angry that his wife ignores him.
★ B. mild-mannered and impassive.
C. overly concerned with the welfare of his garden.
D. upset that the beast was browsing among the tulips.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the poem and answer question 4.

"Hope" is the thing with feathers□
That perches in the soul□
And sings the tune without the words□
And never stops□at all□

And sweetest□in the Gale□is heard□
And sore must be the storm□
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm□

I've heard it in the chilliest land□
And on the strangest Sea□
Yet, never, in Extremity,
it asked a crumb□of me.

(Emily Dickinson, "'Hope' is the thing with feathers")

High

4. When the speaker states in the last stanza that she has "Heard it in the chilliest land□/ And on the strangest Sea□," she is saying that she

A. lost hope during some very trying times.
B. has traveled in some very odd and cold places.
★ C. never lost hope even when she had to endure many hardships.
D. did not get discouraged even when 'hope' made many demands on her.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 21)

Creates hypotheses and predicts outcomes.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a passage which contains ideas that are related in some way.

The student will be asked to develop a logical hypothesis for information in a descriptive passage or predict an outcome in a narrative passage.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and choose the most logical hypothesis about the setting.

From the open well in the yard, Sarah drew some water and poured it into a jug. Then she set off across the fields to where her mother was planting corn. As she approached, Mrs. Jenkins shaded her eyes from the bright rays of the setting sun and stopped the mare in the middle of a furrow.

Medium

1. The setting of this passage is probably on

★ A. a farm.
B. another planet.
C. the town square.
D. the edge of town.

Read this passage and identify the logical pattern of ideas.

My opponent in this campaign has disagreed with my position on the issues, attempted to win over my staff, infiltrated my campaign, blackmailed my relatives, and, worst of all, directly attacked my personal honor and integrity.

High

2. The pattern of ideas is

A. comparison or contrast.
B. subordination.
C. cause-effect.
★ D. climactic.

Read the passage and answer question 3.

His red pen was nearly out of ink, but Ted thought he could evaluate one more paper with it. He pulled the key next to the paper and checked the wrong answers. Nearly everyone was getting the long division questions wrong. He would have to review long division tomorrow in class.

Medium

3. The character described here is probably a

A. student.
★ B. teacher.
C. businessman.
D. computer programmer.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 21)

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Medium

Read the passage and answer the question that follows.

In seventh grade, Charisse decided she wanted to go to college. She immediately planted the idea in her parents' minds. They were skeptical about her possibilities at first but the idea sprouted and began to grow. Charisse had to weed out her aunt's and uncle's opposition; they thought college a waste of money. Finally, Charisse's decision bore fruit last fall when she entered State University on a scholarship.

Medium

4. This passage suggests that going to college was

★ A. Charisse's idea.
B. an impossibility.
C. her parents' idea.
D. her aunt's and uncle's idea.

Read the passage and answer the question that follows.

The largest industrial accident in history occurred on December 3, 1984, at the Union Carbide Pesticide Plant located in Bhopal, India. A chemical, methyl isocyanate (MIC), used in making pesticides, was accidently mixed with water. This mixture caused a chemical reaction that made the pressure in its underground storage tank increase. A safety system designed to prevent such an accident failed, and toxic MIC gas was released into the air. Twenty-five thousand people were killed and the respiratory systems of another 200,000 people were affected when they breathed this gas.

High

5. What was the effect of mixing methyl isocyanate with water, according to this author?

A. the deaths of more than 200,000 people in Bhopal, India
B. worldwide outrage and a demand for tougher environmental laws
C. the failure of the safety system designed to prevent just such an accident
★ D. a chemical reaction that increased the pressure in the underground storage tank.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer the question.

Hunger is a world problem. Many humans are starving to death, even though enough food is produced to feed everyone. Some analysts suggest that overpopulation is the problem. Other concerned people believe that poor conservation practices have led to starvation. In some countries, fighting and war interfere with food production and distribution.

High

6. Which condition would cause people to blame starvation on overpopulation?

A. children helping in the fields
B. small towns and villages suffering from starvation
C. truckloads of food rotting in warehouses due to roadblocks
★ D. statistics on population growth and low yearly crop production

Read the passage and choose the most logical hypothesis about the circumstances in the following two questions.

Over the centuries, many theories about the lost island of Atlantis have been proposed: Atlantis was cursed by ancient gods and pushed under water by the wrath of the gods; the "Great Flood" reported in the Old Testament caused the destruction of Atlantis; the island was actually a settlement for extraterrestials from another planet, and they deliberately sank the island just before they moved on to another solar system; Atlantis was covered by water when a sudden rise in sea level, caused by glacial meltwater, occurred more than eleven thousand years ago. These and other explanations have been considered. Speculation continues about whether or not Atlantis ever existed. Perhaps archaeologists and historians will discover some hard evidence to prove or disprove its existence. Until then, Atlantis will remain a mystery.

Medium

7. According to the author, what was the **most** logical cause of the destruction of Atlantis?

A. Atlantis was destroyed by the wrath of the gods.
B. Extraterrestrials deliberately sank the island when they left Earth.
★ C. Glacial meltwater covered Atlantis when the sea level suddenly rose.
D. The Great Flood, as reported in the Old Testament, caused the destruction.

Medium

8. What was the effect of the destruction of Atlantis, according to the author?

A. There were no survivors when Atlantis was destroyed.
★ B. Atlantis may never have existed, so there is no known effect.
C. Glacial meltwater covered Atlantis when the sea level suddenly rose.
D. The extraterrestrials may have chosen to leave Earth and never return.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 22)

Defends conclusions rationally.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a conclusion and asked to organize a list of sentences supporting that conclusion in the best way possible.

The student will be given a proposal and asked to identify the weakest support for the proposal.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 22)

Sample Items	**★ Key**	**Cognitive Level**
		Medium

1. Which way of organizing the list of sentences below will **best** support the following conclusion?

   It will be impossible to enforce the rule forbidding students from keeping food in their dormitory rooms.

   1. The dormitory grapevine is too well-organized to allow enforcement.
   2. On each floor of the dorm, there is an individual who is in charge of communications between floors.
   3. This individual has three assistants who can run to each of the other three floors warning students that the inspectors are coming.
   4. Since the inspections only take place after all the students are required to be in the dorm, this system allows all the students to conceal their food before the inspectors arrive.

   A. 3, 1, 2, 4
   ★ B. 1, 2, 3, 4
   C. 2, 3, 1, 4
   D 3, 4, 2, 1

Medium

2. Which way of organizing the list of sentences below will best support this conclusion?

   Take care of your body in youth and it will take care of you in age.

   1. But just because we can doesn't mean we should; the abuse we put our bodies through will come back to haunt us as we age, in the form of permanent aches and stiffness.
   2. Strains and sprains, even broken bones mend more quickly before the age of 30 than after.
   3. With less pain, we can push our young bodies to greater limits than when we're older: we can run farther and faster, and we can stay awake for days.
   4. Young bodies have great resilience to heal and keep on growing.

   A 1, 2, 3, 4
   B. 4, 2, 3, 1
   C. 2, 1, 4, 3
   ★ D. 3, 2, 1, 4

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 22)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Medium

3. Which way of organizing the list of sentences below will **best** support the following conclusion?

Without the blues musicians of the early twentieth century, popular music, such as rock 'n' roll, would not have been invented.

1. Blues music and rock 'n' roll share many similarities, one of which is their chord structures.
2. Later rock musicians added such instruments as the electric guitar and drums to obtain their characteristic sound.
3. Blues music, which began at least 50 years before rock 'n' roll, is based on a simple, three-chord progression.
4. Early rock musicians, such as Elvis and Buddy Holly, modeled their music on this progression.

A. 4, 2, 1, 3
★ B. 1, 3, 4, 2
C. 3. 2. 4, 1
D. 2, 3, 1, 4

High

4. Which statement is the **weakest** support for the following paragraph?

All U.S. citizens who wish to vote in the primary elections must choose one of two parties□Democrat or Republican□in order to register. Some states have added the ballot for "Independent," to allow third-party voting.

A. The two-party system has worked well, and should not be changed.
B. Independent parties have had up to 20% of the popular vote, and should be considered as a legitimate party in all the states.
C. It doesn't matter which party you register in, because Independents never get enough votes to make a difference in the outcome.
★ D. With the increase in the number of immigrants and new citizens in the U.S. over the past two decades, there are fewer candidates for office.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 22)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer the question that follows.

In cities, enormous office buildings rise up to block the light and view. Emissions from traffic, furnaces, and power plants thicken the city air. The constant wail of sirens and the roar of traffic assault auditory nerves and distract attention. No wonder the people who live here become at least nervous, sometimes desperate. Crowded together in these overpopulated centers, we can't sanitarily handle our waste or humanely help the impoverished, the homeless, the insane. Who would raise children in such a setting?

High

5. Which assertion is **best** supported by the evidence in the above passage?

A. Many poor people live in cities.
★ B. Cities are not good places to raise children.
C Ambulance and police sirens make people nervous.
D. Cities are in such bad shape that they are losing population.

English Language Arts QCC Standard; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 26)

Invents solutions to problems using thinking techniques (e.g., metaphors, analogies, models, brainstorming, and role-playing).

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

All given examples should be relevant to students.

Given a description of a nonlinear technique, the student will identify the technique.

Given a problem, the student will choose the most useful problem-solving technique.

The student will read a clear explanation of analogies, then solve the analogy.

Given a problematic situation and possible metaphors for the problem, the student will identify the most appropriate metaphors for the problem. Dead metaphors (*roof of the mouth, eye of the storm, heart of the matter, arm of the chair*) should not be used, because they are so overused that they no longer seem like figures of speech and their metaphorical connections are not recognized. In a short answer, the student will justify his or her choice of a helpful metaphor.

English Language Arts QCC Standard; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 26)

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer the question.

To help his students come up with many topic options for their essays, Mr. O'Connor had them call out any topic they could think of while he wrote all options on the chalkboard. The students then had a long list from which to choose.

Low

1. The problem-solving technique being used was

   A. role-playing.
   ★ B brainstorming.
   C. creating metaphors.
   D. constructing models.

Read the passage and answer the question.

In preparing a presentation to convince local businesses to support their recycling program, some students in the Ecology Club pretended to be businesspeople, voicing their objections to recycling. Other club members practiced their persuasive speaking to counteract the objections and reservations of the businesspeople.

Low

2. What problem-solving technique were these students using?

   A. constructing models
   B creating metaphors
   C. brainstorming
   ★ D. role-playing

Low

3. Your class needs to raise money to pay for senior activities. What problem-solving technique would **most** help the Fund-raising Committee come up with ideas?

   A. constructing models
   B. creating metaphors
   ★ C. brainstorming
   D. role-playing

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Low

4. You are going for an interview with the City Parks Department for a summer job. What problem-solving technique would **most** help you prepare for the interview?

★ A. role-playing
B. brainstorming
C. creating metaphors
D. constructing models

Medium

5. Complete the analogy.

SMOKE:CHIMNEY

_____

A. roof:house
B. bricks:wall
C. faucet:water
★ D. steam:teapot

Medium

6. Complete the analogy.

CHAPTER:BOOK

_____

A. book:dictionary
★ B. Georgia:United States
C. question:answer
D. index:preface

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 26)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level

Read the paragraph below and then answer the question.

The Indian stood silently on the bluff, watching the smoke moving along the edge of the canyon. The smoke seemed to be coming out of a long tube, attached to a shiny, dark wagon with many wheels. Behind the wagon were many more wagons on wheels. The Indian was startled by the sounds as the "many-wagons-on-wheels-together" came closer. He frowned. He did not like the look of this new intrusion in his lands.

High

7. Which metaphor describes the Indian's perception **most closely**?

A. This was his first experience with a *wagon train.*
B. His *face was granite* as he watched the smoke.
★ C. He was seeing an *iron horse* for the first time.
D. He had the *eyes of an eagle.*

English Language Arts QCC Standard; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 27)

Analyzes logical relationships in arguments and detects fallacies.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be given a passage that contains ideas which are related in some way. The student will be asked to identify or analyze the relationship. Relationships may include cause/effect, comparison/ contrast, subordination, or climactic patterns.

The student will recognize (but not name) fallacies in logical thinking (such as false cause/effect relationships, name-calling, begging the question, glittering generalities, either/or fallacy, red herrings, questionable testimonials, catchwords, false cause arguments, and bandwagon) in a list of statements or arguments and identify the statement or argument that does not belong in the list.

English Language Arts QCC Standard; Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 27)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer the following two questions.

In the fourteenth century, people had many explanations of the terrible plague that killed so many Europeans. Some doctors believed that the plague was carried by poisonous air. Others favored an astrological theory, believing that a particular lineup of the planets was sent by God to punish people for their sins. No one imagined that, as we now know, the reason behind all the deaths was a tiny bacterium carried by fleas and rats. The horror of the plague was increased by the mystery behind its cause.

Medium

1. According to this author, what was the cause of the fourteenth century plague?

★ A. It was carried by fleas and rats.
B. It was carried by poisons in the air.
C. It was caused by a lineup of the planets.
D. It was sent by God to punish people for their sins.

Medium

2. What was the effect of the plague, according to this author?

A. Astrology became the most important science.
B. People began to worry about air pollution.
C. People began to have more faith in God.
★ D. Many Europeans were killed.

Read the passage and answer the question.

At first I thought there must be some error. After all, I was the only person on the ship who had any understanding of the problems we faced, and yet I was treated like a commoner. I was outraged, naturally, and thought to seek out the captain and complain, but decided that course of action to be beneath my dignity. Instead, I chose to spend my time observing the crew, who were unaware of the grim fate which faced them and so went stolidly about their tasks. As each new day arrived, my fears increased. It seemed to me as though I was the only sane person aboard, surrounded by chaos and insanity.

High

3. Which statement is an example of illogical thinking?

A. I was treated like a commoner.
★ B. I was the only sane person aboard.
C I chose to spend my time observing the crew.
D. That course of action was beneath my dignity.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 28)

Recognizes different purposes and methods of writing; identifies a writer□s tone and point of view.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be asked to identify ways of establishing tone. The student will be given a passage in which the writer takes a position on a given subject. The writer must use a particular tone that can be identified in a single word (e.g., friendly, serious, eager, sympathetic, concerned, sarcastic, humorous, hostile). The diction used in the passage must be readily identifiable as contributing to the tone.

The student will identify position, tone, and diction.

The student will be given a passage whose overall purpose is to persuade, explain, describe, or inform, and will be asked to identify the overall purpose and sections of the passage that employ other methods of writing (narration, exposition, description, persuasion). The sentences in this passage will be numbered to make the responses easier to write.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 28)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level
		Low

1. How can an author **most effectively** establish a humorous tone?

   A. narrating everything
   B. choosing funny topics
   ★ C. using comical examples
   D. explaining jokes carefully

Low

2. An author can **most effectively** establish a hostile tone by

   A. explaining nothing.
   B. narrating everything.
   C. choosing argumentative topics.
   ★ D. using sharply critical vocabulary.

Read this excerpt from a student paper and answer questions 3-8.

1) I strongly advise students who need financial help in order to continue their studies to look into the Rice Foundation's scholarship program, which grants scholarships to disadvantaged or independent students so that they may go to college or technical school. 2) Many talented people with great potential would have been left out of the education process if the Rice Foundation had not given them scholarships. 3) For example, my cousin, Joe, discovered during high school that he was very good at using computers 4) But since his parents did not have much money, Joe might never have done anything with his talent without the help of the foundation. 5) Joe applied for and received a scholarship, attended Tech for three years, and is now a computer programmer for a major corporation. 6) As you can see, young people who are willing to work hard can make it on their own with help from the Rice Foundation. 7) Getting information about the foundation's scholarships is a painless process. 8) In order to find out more about Rice Foundation scholarships, students should contact their guidance counselor. 9) The guidance counselor will provide students with information about the scholarships and the forms to be filled out. 10) The counselor will also help interested students to fill out the forms and send them to the foundation. 11) The Rice Foundation has helped many young people to further their education in the past and can help many more in the future. 12) I urge high school students to investigate the opportunities offered by the foundation.

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level
		Medium

3. The position of the writer regarding scholarships is that

   A. it is difficult to get information about funding.
   B. many talented people are good with computers.
★ C. the Rice Foundation is a good resource for students.
   D. there are many good students who don't attend college.

Medium

4. The tone of this writer can **best** be described as

★ A. encouraging.
   B. humorous.
   C. serious.
   D. sympathetic.

Medium

5. Which words and phrases from the passage contribute **most** to the tone of the passage?

   A. Many talented people with potential have been left out of the education process.
   B. My cousin, Joe, discovered he was very good at using computers.
   C. Young people are willing to work hard and make it on their own.
★ D. I urge high school students to investigate the opportunities.

High

6. The primary purpose of the preceding passage is to

   A. tell the story of Joe's experience.
   B. explain how to get a scholarship.
   C. describe the scholarship process.
★ D. persuade students to apply for a scholarship.

High

7. Identify the section of the passage that is expository.

   A. sentences 3 to 6
   B. sentences 6 to 8
   C. sentences 8 to 11
★ D. sentences 10 to 12

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 28)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level
		High

8. Identify the section of the passage that is narrative.

★ A. sentences 3 to 5
B. sentences 7 to 9
C. sentences 9 to 11
D. sentences 11 to 12

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 29)

Reads, discusses, and analyzes American literature representing diversity (e.g., gender, ethnicity).

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read literature from diverse cultures and identify basic elements such as tone, point of view, style, setting, and figures of speech.

The student will identify major universal themes such as social alienation, internal and external conflict, love, fear, anxiety, joy, envy, death, etc.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read this poem and answer questions 1-3.

BY THE STREAM

By the stream I dream in calm
delight, and watch as in a
glass,
How the clouds like crowds of
snowy-hued and white-robed
maidens pass,
And the water into ripples breaks
and sparkles as it spreads,
Like a host of armored knights
with silver helmets on their
heads.
And I deem the stream an emblem
fit of human life may go,
For I find a mind may sparkle
much and yet but shallows
show,
And a soul may glow with myriad
lights and wondrous mys-
teries,
When it only lies a dormant thing
and mirrors what it sees.

(Paul Laurence Dunbar)

Low

1. The point of view used in this poem is

★ A. first person.
B. third-person limited.
C. third-person omniscient.
D. third-person subjective.

Sample Items	**★ Key**	**Cognitive Level**
		Medium

2. In this poem, Paul Laurence Dunbar says, "How the clouds like crowds of snowy-hued and white-robed maidens pass." This is an example of

★ A. simile.
B. metaphor.
C. oxymoron.
D. hyperbole.

High

3. Which sentence **best** describes the theme of this poem? The narrator

A. realizes that it is easy to fall asleep while watching a calm stream.
B. believes that the knights and maidens in his dreams have come to life.
C. discovers that many clouds look like people when reflected in a stream.
★ D. realizes that people, like a reflection in a stream, may often be mirrors of their environment.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 31)

Applies knowledge of literary terms to works.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student is asked to demonstrate comprehension using appropriate literary terms. Items assessing this skill may or may not be passage-dependent.

When accompanying a text, these items are usually combined with items which assess other standards as well.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the poem and answer the question.

We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask.

(Paul Laurence Dunbar, "We Wear the Mask")

Medium

1. In Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem, African-American people are suffering but feel compelled to hide their feelings. In literary terms this is the

   A. climax.
   B. plot.
   C. setting.
★ D. theme

Medium

2. In the poem, Dunbar describes the way in which he covers his anguish when he repeats the phrase, "We wear the mask." In literary terms, the repeated use of the phrase is

★ A. a refrain.
   B. imagery.
   C. assonance.
   D. onomatopoeia.

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Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the poem and answer the question.

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be, blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day□at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

(Walt Whitman, "I Hear America Singing")

High

3. Throughout the poem, Whitman characterizes Americans to suggest that

A. women do easier work than men.
B. only the young fellows can go to the party at night.
C. Americans would sing if they were on a steamboat deck.
★ D. Americans are strong and hard-working and perform many kinds of duties.

High

4. In the poem, Whitman repeats the word *singing* for each of the persons he describes, in order to

A. show that Americans like to sing carols.
B. suggest that people should sing while they work.
C. suggest that the national anthem should always be sung at intermission of public events.
★ D. show that the country seems to sing because of the many voices of all the different types of Americans.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 32)

Develops an understanding of the effect of history on American literature (e.g., literary movements and periods).

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be asked to identify patterns of influence between American literature and

- history (*e.g., wars and battles, migrations, ecological events, inventions, and discoveries*);
- cultural beliefs (*e.g., freedom, financial success, size and beauty, physical strength, Manifest Destiny, world leadership, family structure, equality);*
- philosophical beliefs (*e.g., availability of Divine presence, predestination, variety of afterlife possibilities, pantheism, realism, naturalism, Romanticism, cynicism);*
- political reality (*e.g. oppression of minorities, economic expansion and recession, reconstruction, industrialization, exploitation of the powerless, seats of political power, centers of education*).

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 32)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level

Low

1. Which literary movement began at the close of the eighteenth century, dominated in western literature during the nineteenth century, and favored emotions and imagination over intellect and logic?

   A. imagism
   B. modernism
   C. realism
★ D. romanticism

Medium

2. When the editors of a book on American literature choose to arrange it chronologically, they **most likely** want

   A. to highlight 20th century writers.
   B. to make the table of contents easier to follow.
   C. to make the dates of books and writers easier to remember.
★ D. to emphasize the relationship between literature and history.

High

3. The writers **most** influenced by a love for nature were the

   A. Puritans of the 1600s.
★ B. transcendentalists of the 1840s.
   C. realists of the 1870s.
   D. naturalists of the 1890s.

High

4. Which work was inspired by the migration of farmers from the Dust Bowl of Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma to the farms of central California?

   A. Carl Sandburg's "The Fog."
   B. Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.
★ C. John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.
   D. Ernest Hemmingway's *The Sun Also Rises*.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 33)

Understands major cultural, religious, philosophical, and political influences on the literature of a given period or culture.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be asked to identify a variety of historical periods, and the more prominent cultures within those historical periods.

The student will be given a (passage, paragraph, excerpt) describing religious, philosophical, or political events during a specified historical time period and will understand the effect these events had on the type of literature written.

The student will be given a prompt (passage, paragraph, excerpt, sentence, phrase) identifying the circumstances (new inventions, movements, social conditions, sweeping changes) within a given time period and will comprehend how these circumstances influenced the type of literature produced.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Reading/Literature (LA.9-12. 33)

Sample Items	★ Key	Cognitive Level

High

1. Which piece of literature was influenced by World War I?

★ A. *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Erich Maria Remarque).
B. *The Red Badge of Courage* (Stephen Crane).
C. *Catch 22* (Joseph Heller).
D. *Brave Men* (Ernie Pyle).

High

2. Which political event influenced Robert Penn Warren to write *All the King's Men*?

A. the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
B. the assassination of President John F. Kennedy
C. the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln
★ D. the assassination of Huey Long, governor of Louisiana

Read the passage and answer the question.

The moving, questing people were migrants now. Those families which had lived on a little piece of land, who had lived and died on forty acres, had now the whole West to rove in. And they scampered about, looking for work; and the highways were streams of people, and the ditch banks were lines of people. Behind them more were coming. The great highways streamed with moving people. There in the Middle- and Southwest had lived a simple agrarian folk who had not changed with industry, who had not formed with machines or known the power and danger of machines in private hands. They had not grown up in the paradoxes of industry. Their senses were still sharp to the ridiculousness of the industrial life.

And then suddenly the machines pushed them out and they swarmed on the highways. The movement changed them; the highways, the camps along the road, the fear of hunger itself, changed them. The children without dinner changed them. They were migrants. And the hostility changed them, welded them, united them□hostility that made the little towns group and arm as though to repel an invader, squads with pick handles, clerks and storekeepers with shotguns, guarding the world against their own people.

High

3. Based on the above excerpt from *The Grapes of Wrath*, the writer, John Steinbeck, was influenced by the effect of

A. the Industrial Revolution.
B. World War I on homeless refugees.
C. the Civil Rights Movement on protesters.
★ D. the Dust Bowl during the Great Depression.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 34)

Identifies the purpose of a speaker and is aware of the techniques a speaker is using to affect an audience.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will be asked to identify the purpose (inform, persuade, instruct, entertain) of a speaker or writer.

The student will be asked to identify the various techniques used by a speaker or writer and to explain how such techniques can affect the audience/reader.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 34)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the poem and passage and answer questions 1-3.

Once more, huddling birds upon the leaves
And summer trembling on a withered vine.
And once more, returning out of pain,
The friendly ghost that was your love and mine.

Men, for the most part, live their lives for the moment, each moment being judged by the success or failure in it. Their pleasant memories, those centered around their successes, are fired repeatedly, like unaimed projectiles, into the empty canyons of their consciousness, where they ricochet off the surfaces, and fill the voids with recurring echoes of their triumphs. Their painful memories, those reflecting their failures, are simply worked off in gyms, or left to rot in the dust behind the screeching sound of tires hell bent on self destruction. And even the most painful of these, the ones wrapped around the smell of her perfumed neck, the feel of her hands, or her face in sleep. Such memories as these are often found floating face down, drowned in some shot glass. Such are the memories of men.

Women, on the other hand, treat their memories like priceless, crystal keepsakes, carefully selecting them, placing them just so. Each one is treasured, precious and unique in its own right, none being quite like the other. The more beautiful ones, the ones ringing with rich tones and sparkling with clear colors, these are brought out regularly, served up with tea and cake, proudly displayed for the envious eyes of less fortunate women. The more fragile ones, rarely brought out, are displayed only in the dark china closets of the mind, fondled occasionally in private rooms, unseen by others, their value known only to the owner. And still, the most delicate of these are wrapped carefully in layers of thin tissue paper and locked safely away forever. They are never unwrapped, never displayed, never savored privately. For the owner lives in constant fear that at any moment her trembling, unsure hands could let the delicate piece slip carelessly through her fingers, sending it crashing to the floor, shattering it into a million pieces, destroying it forever, along with her fragile heart. And such are the memories of women.

(Carol Dixon, from *Going Home*)

Medium

1. In the passage above, the writer's primary purpose is to _____ the reader.

A. inform
B persuade
C. instruct
★ D. entertain

Sample Items	**★ Key**	**Cognitive Level**
		Medium

2. Which of these techniques does the writer use in the passage in order to establish a unique tone and voice?

★ A. extended use of metaphor
B. duality of theme and purpose
C. multiple subplots and broad characterization
D. creating a hypothesis and supporting it with facts

High

3. When the writer says, in the poem, "The friendly ghost that was your love and mine," it is **most likely** designed to

A. imply that she had a love affair which no longer exists.
★ B. instill feelings of melancholy about former relationships.
C. indicate that she is haunted with thoughts about the past.
D. impress the reader that she can write both prose and poetry.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 35)

Adapts words and strategies to various situations and audiences.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read a prompt (passage, paragraph, excerpt) and identify how the choice of words used by the writer can have an impact on the reader.

The student will be given a list of various audiences (organizations, groups, populations) and asked to identify what changes or adjustments might be necessary in order for the writer to adapt to the needs or expectations of the audiences.

The student will be given a list of audiences which each have different situations or circumstances and will select the strategy most suitable when addressing a specific audience.

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage and answer questions 1-2.

They had quarreled all morning, squalled all summer about the incidentals: how tight the girl's cut-off jeans were, the "Every Inch a Woman" T-shirt, her choice of music and how loud she played it, her practiced inattention, her sullen look. Bored. Displaced.

"And what do you think happens to a chigger if nobody ever walks by his weed?" her granny asked, heading for the house with that sidelong uneager unanswered glance, hoping for what? The surprise gift of a smile? Nothing. The woman shook her head and said it. "Nothing." The door slammed behind her. Let it.

"I hate it here!" the girl yelled then. She picked up a stick and broke it and threw the pieces□one from each hand□at the laundry drying in the noon. Missed. Missed. Then she turned on her bare, haughty heel and set off high-shouldered into the heat, quick but not far, not far enough□no road was *that* long□only as far as she dared. At the gate, a rusty chain swinging between two lichened posts, she stopped, then backed up the raw drive to make a run at the barrier, lofting, clearing it clean, her long hair wild in the sun Triumphant, she looked back at the house where she caught at the dark window her granny's face in its perpetual eclipse of disappointment, old at fifty. She stepped back, but the girl saw her.

You don't know me!" the girl shouted, chin high, and ran till her ribs ached.

("How Far She Went" by Mary Hood)

Medium

1. Which of the following groups of words are used by the writer to convey the girl's attitude to the reader?

A. slammed, raw, lofting
★ B. inattention, sullen, haughty
C. sidelong, uneager, unanswered
D. disappointment, squalled, surprise

Medium

2. Which of the following phrases is NOT used by the author to describe the setting to the reader?

A. the dark window
B. the laundry, drying in the noon
★ C. her choice of music and how loud she played it
D. a rusty chain swinging between two lichened posts

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the speech you have prepared for the teenagers of Future Farmers of America [along with the bracketed instructions for yourself] and follow the directions.

Welcome to the FFA conference. We'll be here at the retreat for the next four days, and we have a great agenda this year: raising superior cattle from calves; how to get the best yield for soybeans; farm equipment maintenance; using spiders instead of pesticides to control insect damage; and many, many more topics of great interest to you all.

But it's not all work and no play. Tonight we'll have a barbeque out on the back forty, and I'm advised that there will be a hayride when it gets dark, so you boys and girls from all over the state can get better acquainted . . . [pause here for audience laughter]

Tomorrow afternoon, after the last workshop, the staff has prepared a water-sports contest that will include logrolling, canoe jousting, and rowboat racing. Anyone interested in signing up to compete should see Mary Ann Adkins□stand up, Mary Ann, so everybody can see you□and fill out the forms she has with her after this brief meeting.

The staff has a surprise in store for you, but I haven't been told what it is, so I guess I'll just have to wait just like you-all will. I like surprises. How about you-all? [keep asking until the kids shout out "yes" with enthusiasm, then continue].

On Saturday night we're really going to swing with a western square dance and we've arranged to have Ed Laudenschlager to be the caller. Those of you who were here last year can recall what a really great caller Ed is, and his wife, Faye, is going to present some line dances that are just super-fun. By the way, Ed says he's going to call some plus dances, and there will be a couple of red-hot calls that'll leave you gasping for breath.

OK. You have free time until five-thirty, then we'll meet in this room and walk over to the barbeque. [depending on weather forecast, advise them what to wear]

Oh! Don't forget to see Mary Ann if you want to be part of the water-sports competition.

You arrive at the retreat an hour before you are scheduled to give your speech, only to discover that the FAA conference was postponed to a later date so that another group, the Hell's Angels Biker's Club, could use the facility. The manager is apologetic, says she forgot to let you know, and pleads with you to make an opening speech to the Hell's Angels group.

High

3. Which of the following agenda items would be your **best** substitute for the FFA agenda in the first paragraph, in order to adapt to your new audience?

A. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*
B. Legal Implications of Traffic Violations
★ C. Solidarity and Organizational Structure
D. Healthy Living Through Tai Chi

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

High

4. In order to adapt to your new audience, which of the following approaches would you take in the presentation of your speech?

   A. Be very serious and avoid humor that might offend anyone
   ★ B. Treat the audience as you would any other group of people
   C. Wear a leather jacket, jackboots, and a spiked helmet
   D. Be more forceful and use biker slang

Read the passage and answer question 5.

High

5. You are preparing a training session on First Aid, which will include CPR, to a group of fourth-grade students. Which of the following strategies is **most suitable** for your presentation?

   A. Do not let the children touch anything, because they are all of an age in which childhood diseases can be spread, and they will contaminate everything.
   ★ B. Treat the subject and the children with respect, make sure they are aware of the gross aspects of injuries, and give them a hands-on experience.
   C. Make sure that they are very quiet and attentive, and give them all the technical and medical terminology as part of the learning process.
   D. Avoid discussing anything that might make them uncomfortable, such as bleeding, poisoning, or not being able to breathe.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 38)

Evaluates messages and effects of mass media (newspaper, television, radio, film, and periodicals).

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

Given a passage containing substantial evidence, the student will identify the assertion best supported by the stated facts.

Given a passage containing a flawed argument, the student will identify which detail would not improve that argument.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Critical Thinking (LA.9-12. 38)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage below and answer the following question.

The high school has a strict dress code; but every year when May warmed up the atmosphere. students came to class in shorts, t-shirts, and cutoff jeans. They slopped around in sandals without socks, pants without belts, and shirts that didn't cover their midriffs. Despite pleas and threats from the vice-principal, the young men and women let their appearance slide, showing almost no regard for acceptable dress.

High

1. Which assertion is **best** supported by the evidence in the above passage?

★ A. The students wanted to be comfortable.
B. The students couldn't afford decent clothing.
C. The students didn't know about the dress code.
D. The students were making fun of the dress code.

Read the following paragraph and answer questions 2-3.

During the first five minutes of *Pump up the Volume*, Christian Slater is crooning, "I got my wild cherry Diet Pepsi." High school kids, alone in their rooms, are holding their boxes of Cap'n Crunch, eating Pepperidge Farm cookies, and sitting next to Best Test cans of paper cement. Take *Lethal Weapon 2*. You've got Mel Gibson in the kitchen, Pepsi in the fridge, and the TV tuned to a commercial for "Hero□a new cologne for men." In *Ghost*, Mustang, Porsche, and Rolaids are mentioned. In 1982, *E.T.* was lured from hiding with a trail of Reese's Pieces, and sales of the candy jumped 65 percent. Look at *Top Gun* and see bomber jackets, at *Pretty Woman* and boots. Did you have an urge to buy Ray-Bans sunglasses after watching *Risky Business*? A scene in *Cocoon: The Return* was reshot to make the label of Quaker Instant Cereal more visible. These references, called product placement, are prearranged, and movie studios are paid thousands, even hundreds of thousands of dollars to get their products displayed in movies. This type of advertising is promoting a product indirectly, by association, and the persons watching the movie associates using the product with being like the star.

High

2. Which of the following details does NOT support the assertion that using real products in a film gives the feeling of everyday naturalness?

★ A. reshooting the Quaker Instant Cereal box to make it more visible
B. using Reese's Pieces to lure E.T. from his hiding place
C. high school kids eating Cap'n Crunch snacks
D. wearing Ray-Ban sunglasses

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

High

3. After reading about product placement in movies, which of the following statements is probably true?

   A. The high cost of movie tickets has discouraged many teenagers from going to the theaters, so advertisers are losing money.
   ★ B. Many persons who go to the movies are unwittingly influenced by product placement and purchase the products as a result.
   C. Most people, particularly teenagers, neither notice nor recall what products are used in the movies they watch.
   D. The cost to have products placed in films is much higher than the profit from higher sales.

Read the following excerpt from a television news broadcast, and answer question 4.

The world was stunned today when eyewitnesses from several countries reported mass sightings of tiny lights in the night sky. These lights appear to be stationary—almost as though they are in a fixed orbit—and can be seen with the naked eye. Many of the people we interviewed were awed, and spoke of their personal religious beliefs as an explanation for the phenomena. Others expressed dismay that the end of the world was imminent, due to cosmic forces beyond our puny control. A few expressed their opinion that these lights are extraterrestrial in nature, and that we have nothing to fear. We are all waiting to see what will happen, on this first day of April, and share our concerns with all of you.

High

4. Based on the information given, which of these statements is **most likely** to be the correct interpretation of the event as described?

   A. The phenomena are real, and there is considerable cause for alarm.
   ★ B. The lights are stars, and the announcer is having fun on All Fools' day.
   C. The reaction of the people is based on their personal beliefs, and is expected.
   D. The position of the television announcer is that people must remain calm in this crisis.

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Writing/Usage/Grammar (LA.9-12. 40)

Understands that language usage is shaped by social, cultural, and geographical differences.

TEST CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The student will read a passage containing a distinctive speech pattern and will be asked to identify a similar speech pattern in the responses.

The student will read a prompt (passage, statement, excerpt) and will be asked to identify which given factors (social, cultural, ethnic, religious, economic) have most likely contributed to the way the language is written or spoken.

The student will read a narrative passage containing nonstandard English such as slang, dialect, jargon, etc. that might influence a reader's perception of the narrator/speaker.

The student will be given a prompt which contains (social, cultural, regional) language and will be asked to identify what communication problems may occur as a result of extreme differences in language usage.

Sample Items ★ **Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the following excerpt and answer the three questions.

Drew and Bobbie turned to go back to the Olds, and the Texaco man walked back alongside of Drew. I heard him ask, "Whose guitar is that-there yonder?" Then he was jumping like a dog on its hind legs back into the filling station. "Lonnie," he hollered, "Come out chere . . . ."

"Git yer banjo," the old man said, and then to Drew, "Come on, play us a little something."

Drew grinned, rolled down the back window of the wagon, got out the big cracked Martin and put on his finger picks. He came back to the front of the Olds and hiked himself onto the hood with one leg up to hold the guitar. He tuned for a minute, and Lonnie came back holding up a five-string banjo with a capo made out of rags and rubber bands.

"Lonnie don't know nuthin' but banjo-pickin'," the old man said. "He ain't never been to school; when he was little he used to sit out in the yard and beat on a lard can with a stick."

(from *Deliverance* by James Dickey)

High

1. Which of the following statements use the same speech pattern as in the passage?

   A. "As you are aware, Sire, there is a plot afoot. Beware, lest thou be betrayed."
   B. "Git outta my face, dude, before I gives you more than you been expectin'."
   C. "Yup. There's a fair norther comin' this way. Get the ballast stowed!"
★ D. "He don't mean nothin' by it; he just ain't quite right in his head."

High

2. Based on the comments of the Texaco man, the location and circumstances which have probably contributed to his speech pattern are a/an

   A. desolate desert area with no schools.
   B. small coastal city with extensive stimuli.
   C. large urban community with high population.
★ D. isolated rural area with limited social interaction.

High

3. After reading this passage, it is possible to conclude by the old man's speech pattern that he is **most likely**

   A. a semi-retired Rhodes Scholar.
   B. a musician from Alabama.
   C. athletic and spry.
★ D. poorly educated

English Language Arts QCC Standard: Writing/Usage/Grammar (LA.9-12. 40)

Sample Items **★ Key** **Cognitive Level**

Read the passage below and answer the following question.

During the Great Depression, Dad worked as a forest ranger in the Adirondack State Park, in upstate New York, but was fired for poaching deer out of season. Work was hard to find, so he answered an ad which read, *"Stokers wanted in Florida. Good Health and Strength necessary."* Dad knew that a stoker was the fireman on a train who shoveled coal into the engine to boil the water that powered the steam-driven locomotive. He'd always loved travel and adventure, so this seemed like a natural for him. He moved the family to Florida, then went to apply for the job, surprised that there was an immediate opening. He quickly learned why. His job as a stoker was to shovel coal into furnaces beneath massive boilers, which heated water for the guests in a hotel. He and one other man worked side by side, from midnight until noon, seven days a week, feeding the voracious appetites of four furnaces. He stayed with it for two years, from 1935 until 1937, and said it was the hardest job he'd ever had. We moved to Ohio, then, where Dad was able to get a job cutting and laying limestone blocks for the WPA, which was the acronym for Works Project Administration, but which the workers called, "we poke along." Dad thought that was appropriate, because it was a federal "make-work" program, and anyone who worked too hard or too fast was warned by the foreman to slow down or he might lose his job.

High

4. The author's father interpreted the want ad wrongly because of his

A. concern that he had been fired from his job.
★ B. misconception that all stokers worked on trains.
C. concern that WPA had more than one definition.
D. awareness that if he worked too hard he'd be in trouble.